

Sabotage, by Thorstein Veblen

# THE DIAL

A FORTNIGHTLY

VOL. LXVI

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# THE DIAL

A FORTNIGHTLY

## *The Moral Devastation of War*

THE SOLDIER HAS BECOME a child. The camp is the place where this new child lives, and military discipline is the force which created him. This is the most striking thing about camp life. The soldiers have become children. They show the same playfulness, indifference, carelessness of consequence, and craving for change; the same desire for excitement, for being on the go, for playing games of chance, that are characteristic of children. Like children they take no thought of the consequence of their acts or interest in the serious and important things of life. Amongst them are no politicians, and having a good time is their ambition in full. Like children, too, they make friends very easily, are extremely social and confidential, having practically no secrets from each other, and readily exchange the most intimate experiences with the friends of a day. This close friendship is not only in things of the spirit. The soldier's sociability takes the form of great readiness to share the material things he has. On getting a box of "goodies" from home, one divides them with his "buddies" (friends)—and his friends include all the soldiers in sight—and with the sharing of the "goodies" one naturally shares his news, and his letters are often read aloud—especially if they happen to be from some admiring and naive ladylove who opens her lonesome heart in terms of endearment to her soldier boy. They love to shout, to sing, to gamble, to fight, to get into escapades, to indulge in pleasantries, and take the world, so to speak, as a playhouse and life as a game where the rules are still to be made and where responsibility and laws have no existence.

This attitude is very strong. It prevails with practically all soldiers. It forces itself upon all of the men who remain in the army as privates. I am not speaking of the officer. I know very little about him, and there are influences which must have a counteracting and restraining effect. But for the private soldier this tendency to forget the world one came from, to lose interest in the serious and weighty things that filled one's life before, and succumb to the irresponsibility in thought and act that is bred in army life, is almost universal. Only he who fails to become a soldier fails to participate

in this spirit of irresponsibility—and he is a very poor soldier indeed, if that prove the case, even if he continue in the military service and wear his uniform. I have seen serious men, troubled and worried with heavy responsibilities and interests either personal or social, succumb to this influence, and in a little while lose themselves and become indifferent to the whole world—excepting the very immediate problem of escaping from boredom. For boredom is the curse of the camp.

Monotony, constant repetition of the same fact, unending similarity and likeness in experience and labor and environment become the chief factors in the soldier's life as soon as the novelty of the situation wears off. This makes the one great aim, the one great ambition of the soldier in camp, to escape the weight of an uncontrollable self-subordination that destroys all difference and all individuality.

There is an equality about camp life that is ideal. It knows no variation. It is perfect. It reduces all things to one level. It dresses all bodies in one cloth, and contracts all souls into one mood—irresponsibility. For the soldier's life is so arranged that the only thing to do is to be irresponsible. His food, shelter, and clothing are provided for him. He has no voice in matters of the most intimate and personal activity. He can do nothing of his own volition. The buttons on his coat are regulated by a rule which he did not make and which he cannot change. The shape of his shoes, the color of his hat cord, the size of his necktie, and the place of his bed are regulated and determined for him. He lives a life where the will has no meaning, and where thought and initiative are not only not demanded but suppressed. He is a nearer approach to an animate tool acting under response to external stimuli than any other human contrivance.

This reduction of the individual variant is not only in things material but in things spiritual as well. Not only do soldiers look alike, but to an extraordinary degree they think and feel alike and about the same things. In civil life each individual is constantly called upon to exercise initiative in the solution of problems peculiar to himself—which involve personal responsibility. But in the army the

problem and the situation are very much alike for each man. It is the problem of finding some medium of creative individual expression inside a system that strives to mold all character and all thought into a single formula and into a single type—a type capable of acting without hesitation to certain given and purely external stimuli having little or no correlation within the experiences of the men themselves.

But man cannot live on obedience and submission alone. The soldier demands something else. He craves some form of activity involving personal responsibility and individual effort. And to satisfy this need for self-expression that finds some outlet in civil life compatible with the ordinary interests of the individual, no matter how cramped and narrow those interests may be, is in the army possible only in extra-military things—things having no relation with the activities which the army imposes upon the men. They cannot contribute to the serious things that are expected of them, and so they seek and find satisfaction in extra-military things generally frowned upon in civil life which, in the army, become a natural and normal variant to the regular and non-varying form of existence imposed from above. It would seem, of course, that this situation would provide an excellent opportunity for good and wholesome external influence along moral and educational lines. For the soldier needs some outlet, and his external life makes him very easily subject to influence. Unfortunately, however, no such provision at all adequate has been provided. I do not at present want to go into a discussion of the activities of the various welfare organizations and of their value to the soldier, excepting to say that their activities have, as a whole, failed to reach the core of the problem—the provision of an opportunity for initiative and self-expression—and that at the very best they have reached but a small portion of the men. While they have had a very definite value in providing little things, they have failed in the larger and deeper sense—failed both as educational and as moral centers providing an imaginative and convincing interpretation of the world forces which brought the men into the army. In fact, the truth is that not only did they fail to give to the soldier something of the meaning of the things involved in a spiritual way in America's entrance into the war, or of the full significance of the slogans that were abroad as indications of those values, but that they seem never to have realized that there was an opportunity to fulfill a very definite need. The welfare organizations as a whole seem to have been perfectly helpless in the light of this need. Their lack of imagination and their helpless and antiquated attitude as to what

constitutes the essentials of moral activity under these conditions is pathetic. They therefore failed to render the one vital and essential service to both the soldier and the nation that was at this time so much needed, and that would have given these organizations a real part in making the American war effort mean something to the world in a spiritual way. This failure to make provision for the intellectual and spiritual needs of the men left them to their own resources to find an escape from their monotonous world—and find it in some measure they did.

The paths to self-expression in camp are extremely limited. And some form of self-expression is essential if men are to retain any semblance of self in an environment so consistently organized to destroy individual personality. Some soldiers came to the army as lovers of books, and in that way found a means of keeping alive their spiritual world. Others had the good fortune to play some musical instrument and gave vent to their pent-up feelings by playing. But most men are neither lovers of books, nor musicians, and even those who are, as a rule, find their environment unconducive to a maintenance of that interest. For men in camp are extremely restless, unable to concentrate, anxious for novelty and change, and not satisfied with the forms of expression that proved satisfactory under normal conditions. There is, therefore, for the soldier only a limited field capable of providing sufficient excitement and interest and opportunity for self-forgetfulness, and that field is chiefly represented by two things—gambling and women.

It is no exaggeration to say that practically every soldier gambles. There is no other activity that is so popular or that seems so satisfactory. Gambling has many forms, but the shooting of dice ("craps") is the most popular. Of all games it is the greatest game of chance and luck, and is therefore the most universal. "Crap shooting" for money is prohibited in the army, and in my camp there has just been issued an order increasing the penalty. But that is the one rule that no one obeys. It is played everywhere and on all occasions. I have seen men on the drill field given a few minutes rest take the dice from their pockets and start a game. At night when the lights are out they will crouch around a candle shielded from observation, and stretched on the floor, or straight on their stomachs, with bated breath and flushed faces, either as participants or observers, spend hours in the game. After payday it is usual to stay up all night, and many a man is broke before morning dawns again, to spend the rest of the month in borrowing "smokes." While "crap" playing is the most general of all games of chance, it is not the only one. Cards in varying

forms, with poker holding its own as the chief, is certainly next in line of favor. After payday many will stay up nights and play for high stakes, until practically all of the money is held by a very few of the card experts in the company. To this must be added the capacity to turn every situation into a game of chance. Men will gamble as to who will buy a drink when in the canteen, or as to whether there will be chicken for dinner. Every dogmatic statement is met by a challenge—from the spelling of a word to the day of mustering out, or as to whether it will rain or snow in the morning. Probably the most interesting game of chance I witnessed took place one night when I was teaching spelling. I had a class in elementary English and some boys were in the test as observers, others as students. The spelling lesson developed into a spelling match, the men betting against each other as to whether they could or could not spell the next word. I agreed to give the words in order as they appeared in the spelling book, and words with the same number of syllables. In a little while the observers began to bet, each choosing his particular favorite to bet on. The tent soon filled to overflowing and the game was in full swing. Up to eleven, when taps was sounded, we had an exciting time of it. I have never witnessed so much will and enthusiasm in the learning of spelling—as for the pupils, they learned more spelling that night than in any other. It was a very successful evening, also, for the schoolmaster, in spite of the fact that the rest of the schedule was crowded by this sudden love for spelling. It made the school. It gave it social standing and the teacher an unwonted popularity.

The soldier is very much concerned about woman. Just as gambling is one of the serious occupations of the soldier, so is the search after woman one of the great games he plays. It is the game of a huntsman, and like a good hunter he displays persistence, energy, avidity, and resourcefulness in the chase. And generally speaking, this activity in the pursuit of woman is not in vain, for by and large practically every soldier who participates in this activity—and a very large majority do—finds his efforts rewarded. And in this process he reduces all social institutions within his reach, from the church to the gambling house, to an instrument for his end, and does so deliberately.

The talk in some quarters to the effect that military discipline has made a moral saint of the American soldier emanates from sources that would place a wish above a fact. And the fact is that the soldier is very much more unmoral than when he entered the army—a fact that has few, if any, exceptions. The truth that infectious diseases are less common in the army than they were, or than they are known

to be in some large cities, is due not so much to greater voluntary abstinence, to higher morality, or even to the lack of opportunity for its spreading, but rather to the fact that military efficiency is not consistent with prudery, and that the army has faced the problem and made provision for its discovery and treatment on a scale more adequate for the situation than in civil life—but most of all to the fact that educational preventive measures are a part of the army scheme and method in dealing with this problem. In fact the army has done a remarkable piece of educational work in sex hygiene. An interesting illustration of the method of approach is the fact that a man is court-martialed for not reporting exposure to contagion rather than for exposure as such. But the interesting thing in the present connection is the soldier's attitude towards woman as that attitude is affected by his life in camp and the narrow outlets which it forces upon him. This attitude is unexpected. It is the attitude of the scientist. It is an attitude shorn of modesty, morals, sentiment, and subjectivity. It is immodest, unmoral, objective, evaluating, and experimental. Men will sit till late at night in a darkened tent, or lie on their cots, their faces covered with the pale glow of a tent stove that burns red on cold nights, and talk about women—but this talk is of the physical rather than the emotional, of the types, the reactions, the temperaments, the differences and the peculiarities of moral concepts, the degrees of perversity, the physical reactions, the methods of approach—in fact, as if it were a problem in physics rather than morals.

The lack of personal interest, the freedom from care, the absence of the restraint of family and association, the close intimacy with men to the exclusion of women, accentuates the interest of and the craving for woman. This craving for the escape from an unnatural and dissatisfying condition lacks however most of those sentimental and affectional aspects which we consider a normal consequence to the intimacy between man and woman. It is an expression of physical hunger desiring physical satiation. It is very much akin to the craving for food by a hungry man, and is talked about and discussed in terms applicable to food hunger, food acquisition, and food satisfying qualities.

This predominating unemotional attitude is so characteristic that it pervades the atmosphere. Let me illustrate. In the town near my camp the public woman has been driven from the street. Some hundred of them are now in jail. But prostitution has prevailed. The soliciting previously carried on openly by the women is now in the hands of young boys—boys from twelve to sixteen years of age. After being accosted a number of times one evening by some of these youngsters I made some remark



offensive to one young huckster, and in reply he avowed, "Look a' here, Soldier, I tell you it is clean, fresh, and good." These were the very adjectives, and others like them, which are on the lips of the men in camp when discussing the problem of sex—an attitude applicable not only to the public woman, but to all women in general. That there are some exceptions to this rule is probably true, but it is also true that these exceptions are rare.

The deteriorating influences of camp life involve other aspects than those indicated, but the widely heralded virtues bred by military discipline—and beyond a certain readiness of give and take and greater sociability I do not know what they are—are achieved at a very heavy cost in terms of human personality. Aside from the political aspects of military institutions, when viewed purely as an influence upon human personality, army life proves to be unhappy in its consequence. For not only does gambling become the chief of the moral occupations, and the physical attitude towards sex a reversion to a type that is not generally considered desirable, but in addition to those things it definitely deteriorates the sense of individuality, of self-respect, of interest, and of that something that gives to a normal being his fiber and his grip upon the world about him. It is a very great destroyer of values—values cherished in civil life. Probably the meaning is best illustrated by a remark made by a Sergeant-Major who, upon being discharged, and while saying good-by, turned to me and said: "I am very glad to go home." "And why this great gladness?" I asked. "Well, it darn near makes a criminal of you if you stay in it long enough," was the reply. And this remark tells a tale that includes most of the things I am trying to say.

It seems a matter of great doubt whether this deteriorating influence could be modified or elimi-

nated by giving something to the army life that it has not at present—something that is described as education. The evidence seems to point to the fact that as long as young men are herded together on a large scale and deprived of the opportunities to contribute democratically to the determination of their own destinies, their own government, and their own labors, no amount of external palliatives will destroy the more serious evils involved in army life. And to democratize an army—truly democratize it—is to undermine the present function of all the military ideology and technique as it relates to the soldier, making him an obedient unthinking instrument of another's will. There seems, in fact, no alternative. One must either accept the present scheme of army life with whatever palliatives and reforms are offered, and accept with it the general evils that come from such a life, or set one's face like flint against the whole scheme of military purpose and military ends.

The soldier's efforts at escape from a dull environment and his efforts to find an outlet for his personal activities are rarely successful. Neither gambling nor women make such provision, and the desire to escape the immediate is always the strongest and most obvious thought and purpose that he exhibits. He is never happier than when he is on the go. Long before the war ended there was some rumor to the effect that my Division would be held on this side for a winter's training. Not only were we chagrined at being denied the privilege of going across, but we were made extremely unhappy at the thought of having to spend a winter in camp,—and one soldier put it tersely and with the common approval of all, "I would rather spend the next six months in Hell than here."

FRANK TANNENBAUM.

### *From a Hill in France*

Beyond the setting of this sun of fate  
I see far off dim towered haunts of story;  
On pain unmerited and sin elate  
Goes down once more its ancient unjust glory.  
I see the hills of death, the fields of hate—  
So twine the bitter blossoms with the sweet—  
Yet all my being surges out to meet  
Thy groves and dim blue plains, Immaculate,  
My Italy . . . Oh God that this should be—  
Red war and Giotto's tower sweetly strong,  
And Rome, the jewel of eternity,  
Dear citadel of consecrated song.  
Remembering thee, small wonder I could stand  
And weep for hopeless love of the one land.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

## *The Lapse to Laissez-Faire*

As . . . the Creator is a being, not only of infinite power and wisdom, but also of infinite goodness, he has been pleased so to contrive the constitution and frame of humanity that we should want no other prompter to enquire after . . . but only our self-love, that universal principle of action. For he has . . . inseparably interwoven the laws of external justice with the happiness of each individual. In consequence of which mutual connection of justice with human felicity, he . . . has graciously reduced the rule of obedience to this one paternal precept "that man should pursue his own true and substantial happiness."—Blackstone, in 1765.

THE RECONSTRUCTION POLICY of the Administration was announced on Monday, December 2, 1918. In an address to the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States in congress assembled the President said:

Our people . . . do not want to be coached and led. They know their own business, are quick and resourceful at every readjustment, definite in purpose, and self-reliant in action. Any leading strings we might put them in would speedily become hopelessly tangled, because they would pay no attention to them and go their own way. . . . From no quarter have I seen any general scheme of "reconstruction" which I thought it likely we could force our spirited business men and self-conscious laborers to accept with due pliancy and obedience.

This statement, blending current fact with obsolete reason, seems out of place in an after-the-war world. The immediate response of the country to it was inharmonious disapproval. The Republican politicians, whose intellectual bankruptcy is well known, and who are content to take any side of a public question the President may leave to them, pointed to another neglected opportunity. The business men, who inconsistently mix a demand for a protective tariff with dreams of a huge foreign trade, were sincerely disappointed. The provincials who, make dislike or distrust of the chief executive the major premise of their political reasoning, cried out immediate disapproval, though they lacked the necessary "therefores." The governmental officials at Washington were distressed to think of a transition to peace proceeding without their bureaucratic supervision. The champions of panaceas, who are always with us, had found the vast and empty concept of "reconstruction" much to their liking, and were put out to see it taken from them so unceremoniously. And even the liberals, who all along have been the President's staunchest friends, were seriously disturbed. To them the voice was the voice of the President, but the speech was that of a younger Mr. Wilson. It suggested the young law student enthusiastic over his Blackstone, the instructor in the denominational college expounding Adam Smith's theory of "the invisible hand," the

presidential candidate preaching "the new freedom" from the gospel according to Jefferson.

What led Mr. Wilson to his new laissez-faire it is impossible to say. One who has thumbed on a Washington desk and tried to read the mind of the man in the White House just across Lafayette Park will claim no ability to fathom the mystery of presidential contemplation. But, whatever the motive, as the matter stood in December, there were reasons for the President's choice. However serious the consequences may be, the alternative policy freshly entered upon at that time would likewise have produced serious consequences. A brief statement of the situation will make this clear beyond peradventure. In the first place the Administration was caught by the unexpected end of the war without a program for a return to peace. At that time the President had not succeeded in giving a content to the word "reconstruction." There is little evidence that he had tried hard; but the mind which coined the word supplied a cosmic term which he could reject as meaningless. In truth few expressions have ever given such genuine satisfaction to such an assortment of minds. To the exporters it meant foreign markets; to the politicians, more offices; to the guild socialists, at least industrial councils; to the single taxers, the single tax; and to social workers, "betterment." The Weeks bill, robbed by the armistice of its chance to provoke senatorial oratory, meant by "reconstruction" what any banker would mean by it. The Overman bill made it a conglomeration of all the things that needed tinkering with which the unimaginative mind of its sponsor could call up at the time. The British Ministry of Reconstruction, in the likeness of which many would have created an American commission, resolved the matter into more than one hundred inquiries, ranging from the constitutionalization of industry to the demobilization of mules. As a minimum it seemed to mean the return to ordinary uses of the men and material displaced by the war. As a maximum it connoted an attempt to take advantage of the general state of flux to arrange elements into a more pleasing social order. Even in this variety Mr. Wilson failed to discover a problem of reconstruction to his liking.

It may have been design rather than accident which found him unprepared in November. Certainly he had empowered no group of men to make a study and determine the feasibility of a program of reconstruction. On the contrary he seems to have settled the matter by assumption, or guess, or the chance advice of a trusted official. The half-

hearted assent to the request of the Council of National Defense last June to be permitted to look into the matter can be interpreted as little more than saying, "If you think anything can be found in that vague inquiry, go to it. Far be it from me to deny you the pleasure." From the first he seems to have bothered little with the matter. And it must be admitted that from the first there was good reason, if not the best reason, for his reticence. He could not have thrilled over the accomplishments of the British Ministry of Reconstruction, which was held up as a model for us. If he attempted to find reason in the maze of their reports he discovered that only two significant recommendations appeared as the result of their countless labors. And, peculiarly enough, both of these—the scheme for industrial councils and the plan for demobilization in terms of industrial needs—were well under way when the committees having them in charge were associated with the Reconstruction Ministry. As for the hundred and more other sub-committees, each did in isolation its appointed task, each performed its clerical labors undisturbed by what others were doing. Most of them decided, as did the sub-committee upon the chemical industry, that the situation after the war would most likely be a serious one and that something ought to be done about it.

Quite likely Mr. Wilson did not busy himself to find out how much better an American commission could do. If he had, it is by no means certain that he would have been greatly impressed. He must know, perhaps better than anyone else, the unsuitableness of agencies of state for such a task. First of all, there is neither in Washington nor elsewhere an adequate body of knowledge about the organization of industry, its interrelations with finance and commerce, and its place in the social life of the nation. The figures which have been gathered into imposing statistical tables relate to the most immediate and ephemeral of problems. The scheme upon which they have been gathered and interpreted is irrelevant to the larger problems involved in controlling a developing industrial society. Second, there is small reason for thinking that any commission which would have proved acceptable to the country would have been willing to approach its problems without bias. At present the decisions of state rest upon rule of thumb, prejudice, and the chance bias of the glad-hand administrator—in fact upon anything except an application of the methods of scientific procedure to the matter in hand. Its prejudice against intellect would have prevented any commission from obtaining the information without which any action is worse than no action. And third, even if an adequate program

of reconstruction could have been devised, the spirit of cooperation necessary to its execution could never have been attained. The many-sided thing known outside of Washington as "the government" would have prevented that. But, whether by accident or no, Mr. Wilson was caught in November without a reconstruction program, and plead persuasively, if not convincingly, for a return to *laissez-faire*.

In the second place, a positive program of reconstruction was bad politics. However we may insist that the common good must override the exigencies of party strife, Mr. Wilson has always kept one eye upon the future of his party. Even with the war on, a cry of "paternalism" had been raised against the government; no one knew better than the President that a "reconstructed peace" would be damned by his political opponents as "socialism." At the time of the armistice the government had just passed the inevitable period of blundering. Its program of control was just beginning to vindicate itself in positive results. Evidence of this preliminary inefficiency was at hand to damn any administration which persisted in the policy. In fact Mr. Wilson's opponents were counting upon a continuance of control, had massed their fire upon this issue, and were determined to make the most of it. They were persuaded that the country was prepared to believe with them that what was medicine in time of war became poison upon the return to peace. The President's tactics robbed them of a convincing argument. It is true that he took the chance of being damned for the ills which attend the lack of a preparation for peace. But he escaped condemnation for the evils which would have attended a badly executed program for the transition period. As between relying upon the knowledge and wisdom of the gods of chance with whom he has a passing acquaintance, and the foresight and discretion of an administration he knows thoroughly, Mr. Wilson preferred the gods.

His program of a lasting peace for the world moved him to the same decision. The President's is "a single-track mind" and he understands that the nation is made up of like-minded individuals. The secret of his political art has always been in engaging the minds of the people upon one question at a time. He is right in rating the issue of an insurance against war higher than any domestic matter. It was easy for him to conclude that whatever of good or ill the term "reconstruction" veiled, it could wait. Its intrusion at this time would disturb the mind of a nation at a time when he wanted it fixed upon the League of Nations. In addition the peace program must not be allowed to incur ill will stirred up by a reconstruction program.



In the third place a positive program of reconstruction would have proved most unpopular. The President is right in saying that the nation at large was crying aloud for a return to *laissez-faire*. While the fight was on, our people were willing to make the sacrifices which they regarded as necessary to victory; but beneath the battle there was resentment at state interference, which accumulated into a vast volume of unexpressed protest. Manufacturers were less sure of the logic of priorities than they were of that of a maximum wage; employers objected to an excess profits tax but would welcome a conscription of labor; laborers objected strenuously to "profiteering," but made no application of the word to their own work and wages. Peculiarly enough there was little impatience at loans, contributions to war charities, and taxes. The serious burdens imposed by the questionable methods by which the war was financed, which found expression in inflation and high prices, provoked little protest. On the contrary the petty annoyances connected with state supervision were a constant source of irritation. In general the public disapproval of governmental departments varied directly with their efficiency. It would be hard, for instance, to convince anyone who knew the Food Administration intimately that its activities consisted in anything more than vain motions. Yet, by flattering the people into believing that their petty savings made holy martyrs of them, it became the most popular of all the government departments. The signing of the armistice removed the incentive to silence. In November the country demanded in no unmistakable terms a return to *laissez-faire*. And the President decided, perhaps with a shrug of the shoulders, to let the people have their way.

Nearly four eventful months have gone by since the President's announcement of his reconversion to *laissez-faire*. Even now the time is not at hand for a final appraisal of his policy; but the outlines of a tentative judgment seem unmistakable. Whether it is because of his proverbial luck, or his foresight, his policy looks better in March than it did in December. This is not because the consequences of *laissez-faire* have been less serious than were anticipated. On the contrary "the industrial depression of 1919," as it will be called in history, is coming more quickly than the forementioned thought. The great advantage of the policy has been in allowing the public to discover reconstruction for itself. A nation which requires visible evidence of a problem's actual presence before it will think about it has been goaded into attention. But the time for antitoxins is now past and, only medicine or surgery will suffice.

To judge the policy aright we must separate the "reconstruction" from the "demobilization" problem; we must draw some sort of a line between the "emergency" and the "constructive" problem. The more we have in mind the immediate questions of readjustment, the less merit we can see in *laissez-faire*. But the more we consider the ultimate issues of the coming peace the more of good it seems to hold. In terms of the latter it says that the government is not the proper agency, and this is not the proper time, to settle the larger issues of machine industry and human welfare. It insists that these are abiding questions which society must attend to in the process of its gradual development. The policy prevents much ado and little done under the pretense of reconstructing the country. It enables specific problems to be dealt with by proper agencies as they arise. It breaks up the larger problems into bits which are manageable and permits time for an adequate understanding and an adequate solution. Upon the "constructive" problem the President's recommendations seem sound.

But it seems impossible to overlook the neglect of the "emergency" problem. It can be justified only upon one of two distinct theories. The first is that the President expected demobilization to be successfully effected in terms of the ordained ritual of the War Department. The second is that his belief in *laissez-faire* rose to the transcendental heights of faith in its efficacy for even so great an emergency. To make the first the fact is to accuse him of ignorance of the limitations of military procedure. To make the second his motive is to charge him with failing to comprehend what is involved in demobilization. The latter seems to have been the case.

For two reasons the President's reliance upon "the simple and obvious system of natural liberty," exhibited in "spirited business men" and "self-conscious laborers," was misplaced. In the first place ordinary business practice cannot be depended upon to secure the full employment of all productive resources. The end of the war brought a threat to employer's profits, the motive upon which Mr. Wilson depends for reorganization. The cancellation of government contracts aggregating at least ten billion dollars robbed many employers of profitable markets. The threatened loss to these industries held a threat to others supplying them with materials and a threat of loss of employment to men. It discouraged buying, which in turn again threatened profits. In addition an anticipated fall in prices discouraged business activity, just when expansion was required to provide work for the men in the army. In the absence of a plan designed to accele-

rate business enterprise, an industrial depression of greater or less magnitude threatened, attended by idleness of plants, unemployment of labor, and waste of human and material resources.

In the second place ordinary business activity could not be depended upon to secure within the demobilization period a proper distribution of men and materials among different industries. If each producer acted for himself and in ignorance of the action of others, the immediate result would be the overproduction of certain goods and the underproduction of others. The losses attending overproduction would impose a check upon business enterprise and lead to a still further disorganization of the system. Eventually, of course, as any champion of laissez-faire can show, matters would all work out nicely. Sooner or later business would expand and all the elements of capital and labor would be drawn into active work, at least all that survived. But this readjustment by a process of trial and error is wasteful and slow. Even before the war many economists were questioning the ability of business enterprise effectively to organize production—and that without a loss of their orthodoxy. Then the aggregate of change from one line of production to another could not have been more than two or three per cent of the total volume of industry per year. If the efficacy of the magic was questionable then, what can be expected of it if from twenty-five to thirty-five per cent of the whole is to be diverted from emergency to ordinary uses within a short period of time? At best it is a poor alternative to a carefully formulated plan which approaches demobilization as a problem in industrial organization and

attempts to formulate principles for the speedy and discriminating return of men and materials to active industry.

Whatever justification may be given a neglect of the problems of reconstruction, the failure of the Administration to formulate a demobilization policy is inexcusable. If the President regarded it as a matter of mere manipulations, he should have inquired into its nature rather than judge it by intuition. If he considered the War Department adequate to handle it, he should have informed himself more particularly about the tasks which it can and cannot do. If adequate knowledge for even this smaller task was lacking, he made no attempt to supply the deficiency. If he had no confidence in the personnel of the departments and boards which would have been charged with the execution of a demobilization program, they held their places subject to his discretion. If the mind of the nation was to be kept upon the need of a lasting peace, it was necessary to prevent the distractions which were the inevitable consequences of even a temporary lapse to laissez-faire. The psychology of one thing at a time is unquestioned. But the fact is that the end of the war brought two immediate and imperative problems. Peace had to be made and the industrial system had to be restored to a peace basis. The double-track problem required a double-track mind. If it was necessary to see to it that the coming peace be a permanent one, it was no less necessary to take care that abiding values be read into the industrial system which is being reestablished.

WALTON H. HAMILTON.

## *Synge's Playboy of the Western World*

### VARIAION

It 's New York, I tell you . . .  
I'd have a home  
on top of a hill;  
there should be roses  
from the roof down;  
and I'd get up every day  
at sunrise.

I should become so beautiful  
you would be embarrassed  
looking at me.

It's New York I tell you,  
a city that lives  
with work  
for men stronger than I;  
with duties  
for a different conscience  
than mine.

EMANUEL CARNEVALI.

## On the Nature and Uses of Sabotage

"**SABOTAGE**" IS A DERIVATIVE of "sabot," which is French for a wooden shoe. It means going slow, with a dragging, clumsy movement, such as that manner of footgear may be expected to bring on. So it has come to describe any maneuver of slowing-down, inefficiency, bungling, obstruction. In American usage the word is very often taken to mean forcible obstruction, destructive tactics, industrial frightfulness, incendiarism and high explosives, although that is plainly not its first meaning nor its common meaning. Nor is that its ordinary meaning as the word is used among those who have advocated a recourse to sabotage as a means of enforcing an argument about wages or the condition of work. The ordinary meaning of the word is better defined by an expression which has latterly come into use among the I. W. W., "conscientious withdrawal of efficiency"—although that phrase does not cover all that is rightly to be included under this technical term.

The sinister meaning which is often attached to the word in American usage, as denoting violence and disorder, appears to be due to the fact that the American usage has been shaped chiefly by persons and newspapers who have aimed to discredit the use of sabotage by organized workmen, and who have therefore laid stress on its less amiable manifestations. This is unfortunate. It lessens the usefulness of the word by making it a means of denunciation rather than of understanding. No doubt violent obstruction has had its share in the strategy of sabotage as carried on by disaffected workmen, as well as in the similar tactics of rival business concerns. It comes into the case as one method of sabotage, though by no means the most usual or the most effective; but it is so spectacular and shocking a method that it has drawn undue attention to itself. Yet such deliberate violence is, no doubt, a relatively minor fact in the case, as compared with that deliberate malingering, confusion, and misdirection of work that makes up the bulk of what the expert practitioners would recognize as legitimate sabotage.

The word first came into use among the organized French workmen, the members of certain *syndicats*, to describe their tactics of passive resistance, and it has continued to be associated with the strategy of these French workmen, who are known as syndicalists, and with their like-minded running-mates in other countries. But the tactics of these syndicalists, and their use of sabotage, do not differ, except in detail, from the tactics of other workmen

elsewhere, or from the similar tactics of friction, obstruction, and delay habitually employed, from time to time, by both employees and employers to enforce an argument about wages and prices. Therefore, in the course of a quarter-century past, the word has quite unavoidably taken on a general meaning in common speech, and has been extended to cover all such peaceable or surreptitious maneuvers of delay, obstruction, friction, and defeat, whether employed by the workmen to enforce their claims, or by the employers to defeat their employees, or by competitive business concerns to get the better of their business rivals or to secure their own advantage.

Such maneuvers of restriction, delay, and hindrance have a large share in the ordinary conduct of business; but it is only lately that this ordinary line of business strategy has come to be recognized as being substantially of the same nature as the ordinary tactics of the syndicalists. So that it has not been usual until the last few years to speak of maneuvers of this kind as sabotage when they are employed by employers and other business concerns. But all this strategy of delay, restriction, hindrance, and defeat is manifestly of the same character, and should conveniently be called by the same name, whether it is carried on by business men or by workmen; so that it is no longer unusual now to find workmen speaking of "capitalistic sabotage" as freely as the employers and the newspapers speak of syndicalist sabotage. As the word is now used, and as it is properly used, it describes a certain system of industrial strategy or management, whether it is employed by one or another. What it describes is a resort to peaceable or surreptitious restriction, delay, withdrawal, or obstruction.

Sabotage commonly works within the law, although it may often be within the letter rather than the spirit of the law. It is used to secure some special advantage or preference, usually of a businesslike sort. It commonly has to do with something in the nature of a vested right, which one or another of the parties in the case aims to secure or defend, or to defeat or diminish; some preferential right or special advantage in respect of income or privilege, something in the way of a vested interest. Workmen have resorted to such measures to secure improved conditions of work, or increased wages, or shorter hours, or to maintain their habitual standards, to all of which they have claimed to have some sort of a vested right. Any strike is of the nature of sabotage, of course. Indeed, a



strike is a typical species of sabotage. That strikes have not been spoken of as sabotage is due to the accidental fact that strikes were in use before this word came into use. So also, of course, a lockout is another typical species of sabotage. That the lockout is employed by the employers against the employees does not change the fact that it is a means of defending a vested right by delay, withdrawal, defeat, and obstruction of the work to be done. Lockouts have not usually been spoken of as sabotage, for the same reason that holds true in the case of strikes. All the while it has been recognized that strikes and lockouts are of identically the same character.

All this does not imply that there is anything discreditable or immoral about this habitual use of strikes and lockouts. They are part of the ordinary conduct of industry under the existing system, and necessarily so. So long as the system remains unchanged these measures are a necessary and legitimate part of it. By virtue of his ownership the owner-employer has a vested right to do as he will with his own property, to deal or not to deal with any person that offers, to withhold or withdraw any part or all of his industrial equipment and natural resources from active use for the time being, to run on half time or to shut down his plant and to lock out all those persons for whom he has no present use on his own premises. There is no question that the lockout is altogether a legitimate maneuver. It may even be meritorious, and it is frequently considered to be meritorious when its use helps to maintain sound conditions in business—that is to say, profitable conditions, as frequently happens. Such is the view of the substantial citizens. So also is the strike legitimate, so long as it keeps within the law; and it may at times even be meritorious, at least in the eyes of the strikers. It is to be admitted quite broadly that both of these typical species of sabotage are altogether fair and honest in principle, although it does not therefore follow that every strike or every lockout is necessarily fair and honest in its working-out. That is in some degree a question of special circumstances.

Sabotage, accordingly, is not to be condemned out of hand, simply as such. There are many measures of policy and management both in private business and in public administration which are unmistakably of the nature of sabotage and which are not only considered to be excusable, but are deliberately sanctioned by statute and common law and by the public conscience. Many such measures are quite of the essence of the case under the established system of law and order, price and business, and are faithfully believed to be indispensable to

the common good. It should not be difficult to show that the common welfare in any community which is organized on the price system cannot be maintained without a salutary use of sabotage—that is to say, such habitual recourse to delay and obstruction of industry and such restriction of output as will maintain prices at a reasonably profitable level and so guard against business depression. Indeed, it is precisely considerations of this nature that are now engaging the best attention of officials and business men in their endeavors to tide over a threatening depression in American business and a consequent season of hardship for all those persons whose main dependence is free income from investments.

Without some salutary restraint in the way of sabotage on the productive use of the available industrial plant and workmen, it is altogether unlikely that prices could be maintained at a reasonably profitable figure for any appreciable time. A businesslike control of the rate and volume of output is indispensable for keeping up a profitable market, and a profitable market is the first and unremitting condition of prosperity in any community whose industry is owned and managed by business men. And the ways and means of this necessary control of the output of industry are always and necessarily something in the nature of sabotage—something in the way of retardation, restriction, withdrawal, unemployment of plant and workmen—whereby production is kept short of productive capacity. The mechanical industry of the new order is inordinately productive. So the rate and volume of output have to be regulated with a view to what the traffic will bear—that is to say, what will yield the largest net return in terms of price to the business men in charge of the country's industrial system. Otherwise there will be "overproduction," business depression, and consequent hard times all round. Overproduction means production in excess of what the market will carry off at a sufficiently profitable price. So it appears that the continued prosperity of the country from day to day hangs on a "conscientious withdrawal of efficiency" by the business men who control the country's industrial output. They control it all for their own use, of course, and their own use means always a profitable price.

In any community that is organized on the price system, with investment and business enterprise, habitual unemployment of the available industrial plant and workmen, in whole or in part, appears to be the indispensable condition without which tolerable conditions of life cannot be maintained. That is to say, in no such community can the industrial system be allowed to work at full

capacity for any appreciable interval of time, on pain of business stagnation and consequent privation for all classes and conditions of men. The requirements of profitable business will not tolerate it. So the rate and volume of output must be adjusted to the needs of the market, not to the working capacity of the available resources, equipment and man power, nor to the community's need of consumable goods. Therefore there must always be a certain variable margin of unemployment of plant and man power. Rate and volume of output can, of course, not be adjusted by exceeding the productive capacity of the industrial system. So it has to be regulated by keeping short of maximum production by more or less, as the condition of the market may require. It is always a question of more or less unemployment of plant and man power, and a shrewd moderation in the unemployment of these available resources, a "conscientious withdrawal of efficiency," therefore, is the beginning of wisdom in all sound workday business enterprise that has to do with industry.

All this is matter of course and notorious. But it is not a topic on which one prefers to dwell. Writers and speakers who dilate on the meritorious exploits of the nation's business men will not commonly allude to this voluminous running administration of sabotage, this conscientious withdrawal of efficiency, that goes into their ordinary day's work. One prefers to dwell on those exceptional, sporadic, and spectacular episodes in business where business men have now and again successfully gone out of the safe and sane highway of conservative business enterprise that is hedged about with a conscientious withdrawal of efficiency, and have endeavored to regulate the output by increasing the productive capacity of the industrial system at one point or another.

But after all, such habitual recourse to peaceable or surreptitious measures of restraint, delay, and obstruction in the ordinary businesslike management of industry is too widely known and too well approved to call for much exposition or illustration. Yet, as one capital illustration of the scope and force of such businesslike withdrawal of efficiency, it may be in place to recall that all the civilized nations are just now undergoing an experiment in businesslike sabotage on an unexampled scale and carried out with unexampled effrontery. All these nations that have come through the war, whether as belligerents or as neutrals, have come into a state of more or less pronounced distress, due to a scarcity of the common necessities of life; and this distress falls, of course, chiefly on the common sort, who have at the same time borne the chief burden of

the war which has brought them to this state of distress. The common man has won the war and lost his livelihood. This need not be said by way of praise or blame. As it stands it is, broadly, an objective statement of fact, which may need some slight qualification, such as broad statements of fact will commonly need. All these nations that have come through the war, and more particularly the common run of their populations, are very much in need of all sorts of supplies for daily use, both for immediate consumption and for productive use. So much so that the prevailing state of distress rises in many places to an altogether unwholesome pitch of privation, for want of the necessary food, clothing, and fuel. Yet in all these countries the staple industries are slowing down. There is an ever increasing withdrawal of efficiency. The industrial plant is increasingly running idle or half idle, running increasingly short of its productive capacity. Workmen are being laid off and an increasing number of those workmen who have been serving in the armies are going idle for want of work, at the same time that the troops which are no longer needed in the service are being demobilized as slowly as popular sentiment will tolerate, apparently for fear that the number of unemployed workmen in the country may presently increase to such proportions as to bring on a catastrophe. And all the while all these peoples are in great need of all sorts of goods and services which these idle plants and idle workmen are fit to produce. But for reasons of business expediency it is impossible to let these idle plants and idle workmen go to work—that is to say for reasons of insufficient profit to the business men interested, or in other words, for reasons of insufficient income to the vested interests which control the staple industries and so regulate the output of product. The traffic will not bear so large a production of goods as the community needs for current consumption, because it is considered doubtful whether so large a supply could be sold at prices that would yield a reasonable profit on the investment—or rather on the capitalization; that is to say, it is considered doubtful whether an increased production, such as to employ more workmen and supply the goods needed by the community, would result in an increased net aggregate income for the vested interests which control these industries. A reasonable profit always means, in effect, the largest obtainable profit.

All this is simple and obvious, and it should scarcely need explicit statement. It is for these business men to manage the country's industry, of course, and therefore to regulate the rate and volume of output; and also of course any regulation of the output by them will be made with a view to the

needs of business; that is to say, with a view to the largest obtainable net profit, not with a view to the physical needs of these peoples who have come through the war and have made the world safe for the business of the vested interests. Should the business men in charge, by any chance aberration, stray from this straight and narrow path of business integrity, and allow the community's needs unduly to influence their management of the community's industry, they would presently find themselves discredited and would probably face insolvency. Their only salvation is a conscientious withdrawal of efficiency. All this lies in the nature of the case. It is the working of the price system, whose creatures and agents these business men are. Their case is rather pathetic, as indeed they admit quite volubly. They are not in a position to manage with a free hand, the reason being that they have in the past, under the routine requirements of the price system as it takes effect in corporation finance, taken on so large an overhead burden of fixed charges that any appreciable decrease in the net earnings of the business will bring any well-managed concern of this class face to face with bankruptcy.

At the present conjuncture, brought on by the war and its termination, the case stands somewhat in this typical shape. In the recent past earnings have been large; these large earnings (free income) have been capitalized; their capitalized value has been added to the corporate capital and covered with securities bearing a fixed income-charge; this income-charge, representing free income, has thereby become a liability on the earnings of the corporation; this liability cannot be met in case the concern's net aggregate earnings fall off in any degree; therefore prices must be kept up to such a figure as will bring the largest net aggregate return, and the only means of keeping up prices is a conscientious withdrawal of efficiency in these staple industries on which the community depends for a supply of the necessities of life.

The business community has hopes of tiding things over by this means, but it is still a point in doubt whether the present unexampled large use of sabotage in the businesslike management of the staple industries will now suffice to bring the business community through this grave crisis without a disastrous shrinkage of its capitalization, and a consequent liquidation; but the point is not in doubt that the physical salvation of these peoples who have come through the war must in any case wait on the pecuniary salvation of these owners of corporate securities which represent free income. It is a sufficiently difficult passage. It appears that production must be curtailed in the staple industries, on pain

of unprofitable prices. The case is not so desperate in those industries which have immediately to do with the production of superfluities; but even these, which depend chiefly on the custom of those kept classes to whom the free income goes, are not feeling altogether secure. For the good of business it is necessary to curtail production of the means of life, on pain of unprofitable prices, at the same time that the increasing need of all sorts of the necessities of life must be met in some passable fashion, on pain of such popular disturbances as will always come of popular distress when it passes the limit of tolerance.

Those wise business men who are charged with administering the salutary modicum of sabotage at this grave juncture may conceivably be faced with a dubious choice between a distasteful curtailment of the free income that goes to the vested interests, on the one hand, and an unmanageable onset of popular discontent on the other hand. And in either alternative lies disaster. Present indications would seem to say that their choice will fall out according to ancient habit, that they will be likely to hold fast by an undiminished free income for the vested interests at the possible cost of any popular discontent that may be in prospect—and then, with the help of the courts and the military arm, presently make reasonable terms with any popular discontent that may arise. In which event it should all occasion no surprise or resentment, inasmuch as it would be nothing unusual or irregular and would presumably be the most expeditious way of reaching a *modus vivendi*. During the past few weeks, too, quite an unusually large number of machine guns have been sold to industrial business concerns of the larger sort, here and there; at least so they say. Business enterprise being the palladium of the Republic, it is right to take any necessary measures for its safeguarding. Price is of the essence of the case, whereas livelihood is not.

The grave emergency that has arisen out of the war and its provisional conclusion is, after all, nothing exceptional except in magnitude and severity. In substance it is the same sort of thing that goes on continually but unobtrusively and as a matter of course in ordinary times of business as usual. It is only that the extremity of the case is calling attention to itself. At the same time it serves impressively to enforce the broad proposition that a conscientious withdrawal of efficiency is the beginning of wisdom in all established business enterprise that has to do with industrial production. But it has been found that this grave interest which the vested interests always have in a salutary retardation of industry at one point or another cannot



well be left altogether to the haphazard and ill-coordinated efforts of individual business concerns, each taking care of its own particular line of sabotage within its own premises. The needed sabotage can best be administered on a comprehensive plan and by a central authority, since the country's industry is of the nature of a comprehensive interlocking system, whereas the business concerns which are called on to control the motions of this industrial system will necessarily work piecemeal, in severalty and at cross-purposes. In effect, their working at cross-purposes results in a sufficiently large aggregate retardation of industry, of course, but the resulting retardation is necessarily somewhat blindly apportioned and does not converge to a neat and perspicuous outcome. Even a reasonable amount of collusion among the interested business concerns will not by itself suffice to carry on that comprehensive moving equilibrium of sabotage that is required to preserve the business community from recurrent collapse or stagnation, or to bring the nation's traffic into line with the general needs of the vested interests.

Where the national government is charged with the general care of the country's business interests, as is invariably the case among the civilized nations, it follows from the nature of the case that the nation's lawgivers and administration will have some share in administering that necessary modicum of sabotage that must always go into the day's work of carrying on industry by business methods and for business purposes. The government is in a position to penalize excessive or unwholesome traffic. So, it is always considered necessary, or at least expedient, by all sound mercantilists to impose and maintain a certain balance or proportion among the several branches of industry and trade that go to make up the nation's industrial system. The purpose commonly urged for measures of this class is the fuller utilization of the nation's industrial resources in material, equipment, and man power; the invariable effect is a lowered efficiency and a wasteful use of these resources, together with an increase of international jealousy. But measures of that kind are thought to be expedient by the mercantilists for these purposes—that is to say, by the statesmen of these civilized nations, for the purposes of the vested interests. The chief and nearly sole means of maintaining such a fabricated balance and proportion among the nation's industries is to obstruct the traffic at some critical point by prohibiting or penalizing any exuberant undesirables among these branches of industry. Disallowance, in whole or in part, is the usual and standard method.

The great standing illustration of sabotage administered by the government is the protective tariff, of course. It protects certain special interests by obstructing competition from beyond the frontier. This is the main use of a national boundary. The effect of the tariff is to keep the supply of goods down and thereby keep the price up, and so to bring reasonably satisfactory dividends to those special interests which deal in the protected articles of trade, at the cost of the underlying community. A protective tariff is a typical conspiracy in restraint of trade. It brings a relatively small, though absolutely large, run of free income to the special interests which benefit by it, at a relatively, and absolutely, large cost to the underlying community, and so it gives rise to a body of vested rights and intangible assets belonging to these special interests.

Of a similar character, in so far that in effect they are in the nature of sabotage—conscientious withdrawal of efficiency—are all manner of excise and revenue-stamp regulations; although they are not always designed for that purpose. Such would be, for instance, the partial or complete prohibition of alcoholic beverages, the regulation of the trade in tobacco, opium, and other deleterious narcotics, drugs, poisons, and high explosives. Of the same nature, in effect if not in intention, are such regulations as the oleomargarine law; as also the unnecessarily costly and vexatious routine of inspection imposed on the production of industrial (denatured) alcohol, which has inured to the benefit of certain business concerns that are interested in other fuels for use in internal-combustion engines; so also the singularly vexatious and elaborately imbecile specifications that limit and discourage the use of the parcel post, for the benefit of the express companies and other carriers which have a vested interest in traffic of that kind.

It is worth noting in the same connection, although it comes in from the other side of the case, that ever since the express companies have been taken over by the federal administration there has visibly gone into effect a comprehensive system of vexation and delay in the detail conduct of their traffic, so contrived as to discredit federal control of this traffic and thereby provoke a popular sentiment in favor of its early return to private control. Much the same state of things has been in evidence in the railway traffic under similar conditions. Sabotage is serviceable as a deterrent, whether in furtherance of the administration work or in contravention of it.

In what has just been said there is, of course, no intention to find fault with any of these uses of sabotage. It is not a question of morals and good intentions. It is always to be presumed as a matter

of course that the guiding spirit in all such governmental moves to regularize the nation's affairs, whether by restraint or by incitement, is a wise solicitude for the nation's enduring gain and security. All that can be said here is that many of these wise measures of restraint and incitement are in the nature of sabotage, and that in effect they habitually, though not invariably, inure to the benefit of certain vested interests—ordinarily vested interests which bulk large in the ownership and control of the nation's resources. That these measures are quite legitimate and presumably salutary, therefore, goes without saying. In effect they are measures for hindering traffic and industry at one point or another, which may often be a wise precaution.

During the period of the war administrative measures in the nature of sabotage have been greatly extended in scope and kind. Peculiar and imperative exigencies have had to be met, and the staple means of meeting many of these new and exceptional exigencies has quite reasonably been something in the way of avoidance, disallowance, penalization, hindrance, a conscientious withdrawal of efficiency from work that does not fall in with the purposes of the Administration. Very much as is true in private business when a situation of doubt and hazard presents itself, so also in the business of government at the present juncture of exacting demands and inconvenient limitations, the Administration has been driven to expedients of disallowance and obstruction with regard to some of the ordinary processes of life, as, for instance, in the non-essential industries. It has also appeared that the ordinary equipment and agencies for gathering and distributing news and other information have in the past developed a capacity far in excess of what can safely be permitted in time of war. The like is true for the ordinary facilities for public discussion of all sorts of public questions. The ordinary facilities, which may have seemed scant enough in time of peace and slack interest, had after all developed a capacity far beyond what the governmental traffic will bear in these uneasy times of war and negotiations, when men are very much on the alert to know what is going on. By a moderate use of the later improvements in the technology of transport and communication, the ordinary means of disseminating information and opinions have grown so efficient that the traffic can no longer be allowed to run at full capacity during a period of stress in the business of government. Even the mail service has proved insufferably efficient, and a selective withdrawal of efficiency has gone into effect. To speak after the analogy of private business, it has been found

best to disallow such use of the mail facilities as does not inure to the benefit of the administration in the way of good will and vested rights of usufruct.

These peremptory measures of disallowance have attracted a wide and dubious attention; but they have doubtless been of a salutary nature and intention, in some way which is not to be understood by outsiders—that is to say, by citizens of the Republic. An unguarded dissemination of information and opinions or an unduly frank canvassing of the relevant facts by these outsiders, will be a handicap on the Administration's work, and may even defeat the Administration's aims. At least so they say.

Something of much the same color has been observed elsewhere and in other times, so that all this nervously alert resort to sabotage on undesirable information and opinions is nothing novel, nor is it peculiarly democratic. The elder statesmen of the great monarchies, east and west, have long ago seen and approved the like. But these elder statesmen of the dynastic regime have gone to their work of sabotage on information because of a palpable division of sentiment between their government and the underlying population, such as does not exist in the advanced democratic commonwealths. The case of Imperial Germany during the period of the war is believed to show such a division of sentiment between the government and the underlying population, and also to show how such a divided sentiment on the part of a distrustful and distrusted population had best be dealt with. The method approved by German dynastic experience is sabotage, of a somewhat free-swung character, censorship, embargo on communication, and also, it is confidently alleged, elaborate misinformation.

Such procedure on the part of the dynastic statesmen of the Empire is comprehensible even to a layman. But how it all stands with those advanced democratic nations, like America, where the government is the dispassionately faithful agent and spokesman of the body of citizens, and where there can consequently be no division of aims and sentiment between the body of officials and any underlying population—all that is a more obscure and hazardous subject of speculation. Yet there has been censorship, somewhat rigorous, and there has been selective refusal of mail facilities, somewhat arbitrary, in these democratic commonwealths also, and not least in America, freely acknowledged to be the most naively democratic of them all. And all the while one would like to believe that it all has somehow served some useful end. It is all sufficiently perplexing.

THORSTEIN VEBLEN.

## A Second Imaginary Conversation

GOSSE AND MOORE

### II

GOSSE. Byron was largely conscious that his literary reputation depended on his acts rather than on his words.

MOORE. But, Gosse, isn't that always so?

GOSSE. Shakespeare.

MOORE. Had Shakespeare in that tiresome phrase trailed a pike in the Low Countries, his contemporaries would have appreciated him as they did Ben Jonson; but he did nothing.

GOSSE. Nor did the Brontes.

MOORE. The Brontes had silhouette thrust upon them; and on looking into *Jane Eyre* after fifty years of absence, I have to confess my inability to discover the qualities that compelled you and Swinburne to write of it as if it were a masterpiece. In speaking of *Wuthering Heights* you were a little more careful—you glided swiftly; but in writing of *Jane Eyre* you spoke of—I have your exact words—"a sweep of tragic passion and the fusion of romantic intrigue with grave and sinister landscape," and will you deny that this is the kind of phrase that the pen drops when we yield to public opinion?

GOSSE. I am glad, flattered, that my *History of English Literature* was of use to you, but I may remark that it was intended primarily for the general reader.

MOORE. I have no difficulty in understanding that you tried to keep purely personal opinions out of your book, judging, and judging wisely, that these would merely puzzle and embarrass the reader you had in your mind. *Jane Eyre* was praised when you wrote by the best informed, and it is to your credit that you were not deceived by the literary babble of the time, nor driven to flouting public opinion, as you might well have been, but with your usual tact judged neither the place nor the moment to be propitious, and refrained. But now that the Bronte epidemic is over, may I not seek to discover what your personal opinion . . .

GOSSE. You can ask me any question.

MOORE. I prefer not to ask any, but tell you the story of *Jane Eyre*.

GOSSE. But what is a book divested of its words?

MOORE. As much as a man is when divested of his flesh. . . Charlotte relates that a widower with one daughter engages *Jane Eyre* as governess, and that it is not very long before *Jane* begins to notice that Mr. Rochester pays her attentions and disappears from time to time into a distant part of

the house. And the attentions Rochester pays to his daughter's governess become more and more marked, and culminate in a proposal of marriage. But the maniac in the distant wing is Mrs. Rochester, and the marriage into which Rochester nearly succeeds in inveigling *Jane* is stopped in the church, at the very altar, by the wife's relations. Extenuating circumstances may be found for the murderer and for the seducer, but it is hard to find any for the bigamist. And Charlotte must have been aware of this, and no doubt would have preferred Rochester to have said, "*Jane*, my wife is a maniac and lives in the distant wing. But if you like to live with me I will try to make you happy and shall succeed, for I love you very dearly." It is possible to imagine an honorable man speaking these words to his daughter's governess. I should not altogether like the bargain, because the parties are not bargaining on equal terms—one is a governess and the other a man of wealth and position. But there can be no question that from a moral as well as from a literary point of view it would be preferable to bigamy. What happens then?

GOSSE. *Jane* returns from the church to the Hall, and I think I can aver that Mr. Rochester is accepted as a penitent—a penitent inasmuch as he regrets his design to inveigle his governess into a sham marriage, and I think he confesses that it would have been wiser to propose that *Jane* should live with him outside of marriage. *Jane* might have accepted him on these terms if she had not been deceived by Rochester in the first instance, but having just escaped a sham marriage, she feels she cannot remain at the Hall, and runs away without clothes or money.

MOORE. I think so, and takes refuge with Parson. And with the help of Parson the story is somewhat tediously drawn out to the requisite three-volume length. The maniac sets fire to the house. She has to, for it is necessary to be rid of her so that Rochester may marry *Jane*. At the same time, it behooves the novelist to show a noble soul in her hero, and the best plot that Charlotte can devise is, that in trying to save his wife's life Rochester loses his sight from a falling beam. Even so, Charlotte's difficulties are not cleared up, for, from the point of drawing-room entertainment, it would be a cheerless sort of story if Rochester did not recover his sight; and as soon as he has been blind a couple of years he says to *Jane*, "*Jane*, something seems to glitter on your dress." "It is



the chain you gave me; your sight is coming back," or words to that effect. Sensation! I know that this story was hailed as a masterpiece; but fifty years have passed over, and it appears to me that the time has come for somebody to say that Jane Eyre is our old friend Mother Goose over again. If you have showed no signs of boredom while listening, Gosse, it is because you feel with me that Jane Eyre is the typical English novel—the story that every generation rewrites and that never fails to attract readers. The details of the story are many and various, each generation invents its own "vocalization," but every version I have seen may be described as a rigmarole with something in it which gives the lady we sit next to at dinner an excuse for talking morality. The original story is written with more intensity than the variants, but nonsense is never really well written, and words avail little if the skeleton is not perfect. We who have been about a good deal have no difficulty in imagining the number of literary pens that a story like Jane Eyre will set scratching, and the chatter it will set flowing at a dinner-table. As: It was, of course, wrong for Rochester to pass himself off as a bachelor. All the same, his plight was a sad one, tied to a maniac wife; and then the sudden switch off—the divorce laws ought to be amended. But do you not fear that if the marriage laws are loosened much further they might as well be done away with? And are you quite sure that if he had confided his secret to Jane in the first instance that she would have refused to live with him? If the speakers are acquainted with French poetry, one of them is sure to quote the lines:

*Gloire dans l'univers, dans les temps, à celui,  
Qui s'immole à jamais pour le salut d'autrui!*

And the inherent desire of martyrdom in the almost ugly, scrappy little woman with burning gray eyes will be described, and the tale told of her embarrassment when she stepped across the threshold of Smith Elder's drawing-room and found herself in the presence of six London celebrities, two of these standing on the hearth-rug, their coat tails lifted so that they might enjoy the blaze more thoroughly. The editor of the Cornhill was there.

At this moment an intrusive footman presses some dish on the speakers, and, having helped themselves, the literary twain fall to thinking how the six portly gentlemen must have enjoyed putting questions to Charlotte, asking how she had gotten that sufficient knowledge of life which enabled her to divine a man like Rochester.

Charlotte and her sister had been to school in Brussels, and they returned home together after a year's schooling; but Charlotte was drawn back to Brussels, in her words, "by an impulse that seemed

to her irresistible"—and it was this irresistible impulse that enlarged the Bronte silhouette almost indefinitely, and the discovery of letters continued the enlargement till it filled the entire literary horizon, and Monsieur Hèger, the schoolmaster, came to supply needy bookmakers with a subject suited to popular taste. "If I could only rid myself of my conscience," she said, on her way to Sainte Gudule. Penitents were passing in and out of the Confessional. Charlotte was a Protestant, and it required an uncontrollable impulse to propel her into the box. At first the Confessor would not hear her, she being a Protestant; but she would not take "No" for an answer; she confessed—what? If we only knew; if the reporters had been able to get hold of that Confessor, there is reason to suppose that we should be discussing Charlotte's morals till we ascended to the Judgment Seat. But if Charlotte had transgressed? If she had, the veracity of the confession would have been impugned. . . .

Even the present war would not be sufficient to quench the desire to discuss whether Charlotte held the Professor's hand or the Professor held hers. It broke out again in the Times, and not more than two years ago. You saw the correspondence, Gosse?

GOSSE. No, I didn't, but I like listening to you; go on.

MOORE. Some wandering gossip or a newly discovered letter blew up the dying embers of this controversy—somebody died, somebody confessed, or new letters were discovered. I have forgotten, if I ever knew. I came upon a middle letter, and was struck by the almost passionate tenacity with which the writer clung to the belief that Charlotte's life had always been gray and dull, and that nothing had ever happened in it to redeem the monotony of ill-health and teaching. We know that we are not virtuous, we know that we cannot be virtuous, but we are anxious to believe that somebody else is virtuous. I suppose it cannot be otherwise, the doctrine of Atonement having taken such a hold on us. But this explanation did not satisfy me altogether, and at odd times the thought returned that there must be more in it than the instinct of the individual, and seeking for the instinct of the hive, I said to myself one day: Of course, the whole national attitude regarding the Brontes would alter if it could be proved that she had held the schoolmaster's hand.

GOSSE. You're in excellent form today, and I'm sorry to interrupt you, but I, too, am being poked up by a constantly recurring thought and cannot help remembering your saying that I glided swiftly over Wuthering Heights, like one anxious not to commit himself to any definite opinion for or

against the book, and I do not think I am going too far if I say that your suggestion was that my private judgment was held in check by the prevalent literary opinion of the time headed by Swinburne, who . . .

MOORE. It seems to me quite reasonable to suppose that a man writing a history of English literature must refrain from challenging received opinions. I thought I had made that sufficiently clear.

GOSSE. Yes; quite plain, and it is no doubt as you say. I did, of course, try to exclude eccentric opinions (I use the word in its grammatical sense), for these would only embarrass and confuse; but you are in a different position, and will, no doubt, undo the mischief I have done by a clear pronouncement. How does *Wuthering Heights* strike you? As a masterpiece?

MOORE. As it appears to me, those who committed their critical reputations to the pronouncement that *Wuthering Heights* was a masterpiece would have done well to consider the word masterpiece. The word is sufficiently explicit—a work executed by one who is a master in his craft; and to be a master in any craft, an apprenticeship is necessary. Emily was born in 1818 and died in 1848, and presumably *Wuthering Heights* was written some years earlier—shall we say at six or seven and twenty? Well, masterpieces are not produced at that age, not even by Raphael, for the simple reason that nobody is a master of his craft, whatever it may be, till he has practiced it for ten years, not even if it be the humble craft of prose narrative. And a casual glance into the book tells those who know how to read that it is just what a girl of genius, unpracticed in her craft and without experience of life, might write in a lonely parsonage over against a Yorkshire heath—wild and violent imaginings shot through with glimpses of real beauty. A glimpse of beauty her vision of Heathcliff surely is—a man haunted by the memory of Catherine, his enemy's wife, who died many years ago, more than twenty have passed over, but for Heathcliff there is nobody in the world but Catherine. She is never far away, often by his elbow; she has come to speak, but she utters no word, but signs to him, and he rises immediately from the meal and follows her across the desolate heath. In vain, needless to say. The hallucination continues; he sees her in every face he looks upon, and we feel with him that only death can release him from the torture of the deception, forever recurring in a hundred different aspects, and always failing him. Did Emily mean the wraith to stand for a symbol of life itself? She hardly knew. She wrote as we dream.

GOSSE. You think that Emily was the genius?

MOORE. The word is inapplicable to prose writers under forty, and more than a single work is necessary, and there is nothing in *Wuthering Heights* to show that Emily Brontë's talent would have developed.

The one that might have developed into a fine writer was Anne. She wrote a book called *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, a baby book, it is true, but the memory of it lingers in me to this day; a story of illegitimate love that came to naught, and for no valid reason that I could discover on my way to Castle Carra, whither I went not a little scared lest perchance I had been born into a world in which nobody transgressed. It is with my boyish dread of a sinless world that she is associated, and with pity for her early death coming before any taste of life. A virgin's death is the very saddest. Anne revealed her sadness to me, and I take this opportunity of paying my debt.

GOSSE. You have thrown every sort of stone against the Brontës, and I can tell by your face that you think you brought down *Jane Eyre* with that last one—a vindictive summary of her book. A silly story no doubt it is, but many silly stories abound in beautiful pages and *Jane Eyre* is not an exception. It is many years since I read it, but I am still haunted by a memory of the twain in a dewy orchard or garden and a dialogue that lasts all night and that ends, I think, with the dawn. You may have forgotten these pages or half forgotten as I have; if so, you will do well to read them again, for I think you would admire them.

MOORE. Your memory is better than mine . . . in this instance.

GOSSE. Thank you for this tribute, which it is an honor to receive from one of prodigious memory, though of slight reading. And now there is a point of criticism which it seems to me you have overlooked. It is that of all the novels written in mid-Victorian years, the Brontës' are the only ones that retain any faint vitality. You can read *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* more easily than Lytton or Disraeli, more easily than the late Victorians, Trollope, even more easily than Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot. I gather from your silence that I have guessed rightly. As a critic of English fiction it behooves you to consider how this has come to pass. But you do not seem to be ready with an answer. Perhaps you will allow me to tell you your charge against the English novel is that it has been, from the hour of its birth to the present year, concerned with the surface of life rather than with the depths—and need we look further for the reason why the novels we enjoyed in our boyhood are rejected by the younger genera-

tion? The great bulk of men and women know life only by the waves, and the popular novelist concerns himself with what attracts his public: the surface of life, all the little odds and oddments, the picturesque follies of the hour, the tricks of speech and manner, the ideas of the moment. His audience is delighted. He is presenting life as it appears to them. But all these waves and wavelets sink into the deep, disappear, and when they have gone, the books go with them. Can it be else?

MOORE. But the Brontes were popular during their lifetime.

GOSSE. To some extent, but it was not until the nineties that they met with any intelligent appreciation.

MOORE. I am beginning to see whither your argument is tending: that the Brontes wrote about life in its essentials, which, like the depths of the sea, do not change.

GOSSE. The parsonage over against the lonely heath excited your derision, but if I may venture to say so, unduly. Mr. Arthur Mellows is never wholly wrong, but he cannot explain himself. That parsonage and that heath which he photographed so often are not interesting in themselves as he thought, but because they saved the Brontes from the English literary tradition, that in prose narrative life as only a thin upper crust is, shall I say, representable.

MOORE. The Brontes, knowing nothing of social life, were forced to look into the depths.

GOSSE. There may be less character in their books than there is in Lytton or Disraeli, but there's more humanity.

MOORE. I see; and that is why Swinburne wrote his monograph. But you record the fact in your biography that when he summoned you to hear it he wearied in his reading and laid it aside so that he might read you his novel—a novel that he never wearied of, but which you and Mr. Wise have decided shall never be published.

GOSSE. Outside his gift no man is very wise; and as I have often mentioned in my biography of the great poet, whom I was fortunate enough to know intimately, Swinburne lost all receptive power at the age of forty. After forty his mind was closed to new ideas; it was less flexible, less elastic. I think that in my biography the word ossification almost occurs. I have no wish to withdraw it. In his later critical writings he never argued, explained, or analyzed. He merely hammered. The noise he made was sometimes ridiculous, as is shown in the sentence in which he called George Eliot "an Amazon thrown sprawling over the crupper of her spavined and spur-galled Peg-

asus." And a hundred sentences as silly and as ugly could be culled from his prose writings. I quote this phrase though it gives me pain to repeat it, for I believe that the origin of the monograph on Charlotte Brontë may be traced to his desire to write something that would give pain to George Eliot and to her admirers, rather than to any genuine admiration of Jane Eyre or Shirley.

MOORE. He liked Dickens in his youth, and during middle age and old age he read Dickens through from end to end every three years, from the Sketches by Boz to the Mystery of Edwin Drood. You tell us that, and more than that—that he read Dickens aloud to Watts-Dunton three times. The Pines needs a biographer—a subject made to your hand, Gosse. And now I'll tell you something you do not know. It was proposed, whether by Frank Harris or another I am not quite sure, but during his editorship, that Swinburne should write an appreciation of Dickens for the Fortnightly. But the paper was never written, on account of the rejection of a poem, a ballad with "The wind wears o'er the heather" for refrain. Have you met with the manuscript of this poem in your researches?

GOSSE. I do not remember it, and Wise and I have gone through all the papers carefully. Are you sure that the poem was by Swinburne?

MOORE. I was told it was by Swinburne. It certainly seemed to me rather casual, and I doubt that the appreciation would have been of much literary value if it had been written. It would have been too much in the Pauline manner, asseveration upon asseveration. But let us not stray from the point of dutiful criticism, and as I am a little weary of fault finding will you confide to me your best thoughts on Dickens? I thirst for some whole-hearted praise.

GOSSE. I look upon Dickens as the first man of English genius who gave the whole of his genius to the novel-reader; he was able to do this, for he was without general culture, and as Matthew Arnold pointed out, two things are necessary for the birth of art—the man and the moment. You have talked to me so much about English prose narrative that I find it a little difficult to disentangle my ideas from yours. But if you will have patience, I think I shall be able to do so. It seems to me certain that in Dickens we got the man of genius, and it seems to me if not as certain, at least arguable, that the moment of his coming was not propitious. By the moment we must understand not only the literary tradition that prevailed in his time, but the circumstances of his life. Dickens was a man of the people, and was without that school and university education which liberated



Landor and Swinburne from the narrow sympathies and latter prejudices of the Victorian age; added to which, he had to get his living, and he could only do this by supplying the drawing-room with entertainment. You see I accept your definition of the English novel; if he had not been a man of genius he would have continued the Lytton and Disraeli modes and we should have more Disraeli modes and we should have had more historical flourishes, verbose politics, sentimental rhodomontades, foppery, and high living. Instead of these, we got the middle and lower classes, of which English literature was hardly aware before Dickens introduced them! You would prefer that he should have laid less stress on superficial markings—superficial is perhaps unnecessary—on markings, and you will tell me that whereas Balzac stands head and shoulders above Daumier, Gavarni, and Monnier; such characters as Micawber, Stiggins, Dombey, and Little Nell do not represent anything deeper, any deeper humanity than Cruikshank and Phiz. I answer you and I think fairly, that though a great man is always greater than his environment, he is born of it and shares its qualities, good and evil. Balzac was favored by circumstance; he lived in a great moment of literary revival, one as favorable to French literature as the Elizabethan age was to English literature. But in spite of these magnificent advantages, the great Tourainian was not, as yourself will admit, free from melodrama and sentimentality. Hand on your heart, is Vautrin better than Bill Sykes, and are the worst pages in *Little Dorrit* worse than certain pages in *La Femme de Trente Ans*?

MOORE. Which of Dickens' books do you like best?

GOSSE. On the whole, *Pickwick*, for we recognize the English middle classes in Mr. *Pickwick*, and it is an achievement to discover an acceptable symbol. In the same book we have Sam Weller, and we discover in him the mind of the lower classes, their humor and good nature. A man that has set forth two figures as typical as these cannot be dismissed as unworthy of our literature merely because his *Travels in Italy* do not fulfill the aspirations of the young idea. For the sake of Mr. *Pickwick* and his valet, Dickens is forgiven, at least by me for the somewhat, shall I say lack-luster buffoonery, of the breach of promise case—Mrs. Bardell, Sergeant Buzfuz, all and sundry. We forget these faults, puerilities, if you will remember that if France's gift was the novelist, England received the incomparable poet. Of what are you thinking?

MOORE. Do not be so prickly . . . of what you are saying and that if our novelist had spent his evenings in the *Nouvelle Athènes*, he would

have written prose narratives worthy of our poetical literature, creating characters that in their seriousness would compare with *Le Père Goriot* and *Philippe*, in *Un Ménage de Garçon*. But if he had gone to France and spent his evenings as you suggest, we should not have had Dickens but another man. His talent was more natural, more spontaneous, than any he would have met in France. He had more talent than Flaubert, Zola, Goncourt, Daudet; but he would have learned from them the value of seriousness. A quick, receptive mind like his would have understood that a convict waiting in a marsh for a boy to bring him a file with which he may file himself from his irons is not a subject for humor. He need not have spent the whole of his youth on the *Boulevard Extérieur*. A few years would have been sufficient to dissipate the vile English tradition that humor is a literate quality. He would have learned that it is more commercial than literary, and that, if it be introduced in large quantities, all life dies out of the narrative. A living and moving story related by a humorist very soon becomes a thing of jeers and laughter, signifying nothing. We must have humor, of course, but the use we must make of our humor is to avoid introducing anything into the narrative that shall distract the reader from the beauty, the mystery, and the pathos of the life we live in this world. Whosoever keeps humor under lock and key is read in the next generation, if he writes well, for to write well without the help of humor is the supreme test. I should like to speak in my essay of the abuse of humor, but it would be difficult to make this abuse plain to a public so uneducated as ours, whose literary sensibilities are restricted to a belief that some jokes are better than others, but that any joke is better than no joke. I do not wish to libel the daily or weekly press, but it would seem to me that we have not a critic among us who is yet prepared to say that humor is but a crutch by the aid of which almost any writer can totter a little way. I am afraid I am repeating myself, but the matter is of such literary importance that a repetition may be forgiven me. Looking back, I catch sight of the *Athenaeum*, our first literary journal in the eighties, and I am not exaggerating when I say that it must have published some hundreds of articles enforcing the doctrine that humor is a primary condition of prose narrative, without its occurring to anybody, though all the best pens in London were writing for the *Athenaeum* in the eighties, that Jean Jacques Rousseau attained a unique reality in literature by abstention from humor; I only remember one smiling sentence in his *Confessions* and that lasts but a minute—at the end of the journey that Jean Jacques undertakes for the benefit of his health.

GOSSE. A great book like the *Confessions* provokes different remembrances in all of us, and I agree with you that the introduction of humor into the *Confessions* would have deprived the book of its high literary quality. A very little humor would have turned a great and beautiful book into a mere vulgarity. Only a very great writer would have abstained from humor, and one shudders at the thought of what the scene in the garden would have become if Jean Jacques had allowed the faintest smile to curl the end of a sentence. And what a feat this scene is! Madame de Wareus calls Jean Jacques into the garden to confide to him her project for his sexual education. She appreciates the boy's embarrassment, telling him that she will give him eight days to think the matter over, and the character that emerges when she folds him in her arms is a new one in literature—the material mistress.

MOORE. It is strange that the admirable lesson given by Jean Jacques was never laid to heart in England.

GOSSE. I would make good some omissions.

MOORE. Pray make good my omissions.

GOSSE. I would point out that we look in vain for humor in the Greek and Latin poets; Aristophanes was an ironist rather than a humorist, and the same may be said of Shakespeare. The gravediggers' scene in *Hamlet* was not written to set the audience giggling, any more than the scene between Cleopatra and the fruit-seller. These scenes and the patter of the porter in *Macbeth* were written to delay the action, so that the spectator might have time to meditate on the tragedies that were on their way to accomplishment. The same cannot be said of the comic scenes relating to the building of the wall in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. They may have been humorous originally, but I think it will be allowed that if the authority of Shakespeare were withdrawn from them they would be resented, and rightly. But once more we are dropping into Shakespearean controversy. And to bring the conversation back, I will say we have strayed into Tom Tiddler's ground. . . . No, you must not interrupt me. You asked me to make good your omissions. . . . The desire to giggle is a very impersonal quality. But there is another humor, one which saves us from urging our ideas upon our friends with undue insistence, and this is a humor which I appreciate, and look upon as the rudder whereby we steer our course through life. I should like to continue a little further, but we have lighted our lanterns, and are searching for a man who has written prose narrative in English seriously. So far as we have gone we have discovered one woman, and it will be a pity if we cannot find a literary mate or concomitant for her. I gather that neither

Dickens nor Thackeray attracts you. Even so, one must repel you more than the other.

MOORE. If Dickens had not come into our literature we should lose more than a certain number of books, something of ourselves, for Dickens has become part of our perceptions, and as the world exists in our perceptions, he has enlarged the world for us. But can as much be said for Thackeray? If he had not come into our literature we should lose some books which I will allow to be admirable, so that hitches and hindrances in our conversation may be avoided. But I do not think that we should lose any more. *Vanity Fair*, for instance, seems to me implicit in the literature that preceded it—in Fielding, to whom he has often been compared, and not without reason, as it appears to me. Almost any reader acquainted with the first writer would be struck with the similarity of mind on reading the second, and would feel that Thackeray had modeled his style on Fielding's, adapting it to the temper of Victorian readers, robbing it of its gusts, and improving the spacing and ordination of the different parts. It seems to me that the same interest in the surface of life marks both writers: both are equally unable or unwilling to look into the depths; one related Squire Western's drunken bouts and his passion for hunting, and the other Pitt Crawley's habit of talking to Horrocks the butler during dinner. To look below the surface bored them. Thackeray's surfaces are often admirable, but that sense of the eternal which gives mystery and awe to a work of art was unknown to him, so it seems to me.

GOSSE. You said that *Tom Jones* was a book without seasons, without trees, without flowers, without a storm cloud above the landscape, or a rag in it. Might not the same strictures be directed with equal force against *Vanity Fair*?

MOORE. Yes indeed. Both books lack intimacy of thought and feeling. No one sits by the fire and thinks what his or her past has been and welcomes the approach of a familiar bird or animal. I do not remember any dog, cat, or parrot in *Vanity Fair*, and I am almost sure that *Tom Jones* is without one. A caged blackbird or thrush is a painful sight, but the parrot has chosen domestication, like the cat and dog. Some of our homebirds love us, the jackdaw very often; the raven prefers the warm outhouse to the windy scarp perhaps. However this may be, he who loves animals and birds is more human than he who doesn't.

GOSSE. Grip loved Barnaby Rudge's shoulder, and was with him always in the Gordon riots and afterwards, I think, in prison. Can you remember what he said?

MOORE. Unfortunately I cannot, it's too long ago. I have forgotten their names but I am con-

sconscious of the presence of dogs and cats in Dickens' pages.

GOSSE. There is Gyp in David Copperfield, who ekes out the character of Dora very happily, and we might think of many others.

MOORE. Dickens' description of Bill Sikes' dog shows that the writer had observed dogs and was in sympathy with their instincts. Altogether Dickens' mind was richer, more abundant than Thackeray's; Thackeray's always seemed to me a meager, sandy mind, an essentially ungenerous soil, that produced only starvelings.

GOSSE. But this description of Thackeray's mind is hardly in agreement with his characters—only the writing is inferior.

MOORE. What is in the mind transpires; he was interested only in life, the drift and letter of social life, always pleased and proud to relate that a Major or a Colonel arrived at his club at a certain hour, and hardly less so to tell us how a lady of high degree is driven to satisfy her milliner and dress-maker by concluding an armistice, paying something on account, the foe to wait for full settlement until the daughter's marriage is brought off. In *Pendennis* and *The Newcomes* a booby is presented deftly, but the conception of a booby is very commonplace. Boobies in Shakespeare, Balzac, and Tourgeniev are men of genius as well as boobies.

GOSSE. Forgive me for interrupting you, but it may be well that I should remind you that the absence of interest in Nature which you deplore in Thackeray is not shared by any first-rate writer in modern or antique times. It has become the fashion to say that we moderns discovered Nature, but is this true? Vergil told the story of the fields as well as Wordsworth, and if the early Irish poets are remarkable for anything, it is for their love of Nature. The only great writer that I can call to mind who never mentioned a tree or flower, a field or hill, is François Villon.

MOORE. It is true that flowers and trees and familiar animals find perhaps as small a place in Villon's poems as in Thackeray's novels. But Villon was not lacking in human sympathies. Now if I remember *The Newcomes* and *Pendennis* correctly, Thackeray's implicit approval of the attitude adopted by his "good" women towards Lady Clara Highgate and the porter's daughter whom they find nursing *Pendennis* shows that human beings were as remote from his sympathies as were the flowers and trees and fields. What he *did* understand though, were prejudices and conventions, and that is why his novels seem old-fashioned to the younger generation.

GOSSE. But his characters represent something more than the conventions of his time. Becky

Sharpe represents an adventuress *prise sur le vif*.

MOORE. An adventuress according to the literary canons of the fifties—an adventuress without a temperament, which is very much the same as a soldier without courage.

GOSSE. But I can imagine a man lacking in physical courage, yet a very good soldier.

MOORE. Through a moral courage that overcomes physical weakness. But it is not so easy to imagine an adventuress overcoming her distaste for love from a sense of duty.

GOSSE. Madame Re'cannier is reputed to have been a cold woman, yet she attracted men. A cold woman leading men on, making them miserable, and taking her pleasure in their misery is conceivable.

MOORE. Quite conceivable; but no such excellent and subtle conception of devilish malignity crossed Thackeray's mind, nor had he in mind the great adventuress, she whose weapon and defense is her sex. His mind did not move on grand, natural lines; he imagined a little intriguing, middle-class woman, determined to get on, and he was interested in her tricks, how she won over the women when they came into the drawing-room after dinner, how she bamboozled the younger Sir Pitt. So far he was in sympathy with his subject; but as it appears to me, his interest in human nature did not compel him to ask himself any essential question about her. In writing once about a celebrated passage in St. Paul I said, "No man is known to us till he has revealed his sex to us," and with the alteration of one word the same phrase will serve me here. Thackeray in writing of Becky Sharpe followed the English tradition. He observed, and abstained from meditation; he was satisfied with externals, and the human nature that belongs to all of us—our humanity—was unknown to him. It did not occur to him to humanize Becky Sharpe by expatiating in her religious feelings, in her superstitions. Mankind is incurably superstitious and one might almost say therefore Thackeray instinctively avoided the subject. He liked men and women better than mankind. He liked character better than humanity; but in omitting any superstition from Becky Sharpe's character he was sinning against the type; no class or type is more likely to seek counsel in oracles, to believe in their line of luck, than the adventurer and the adventuress; but never once does he send Becky Sharpe running to a Bond Street fortune-teller.

GOSSE. You have clung somewhat tediously to your idea that the English novelist never looks into the depths of life . . . and I have been waiting all the while for a quotation from Thackeray on this very question. He says somewhere, and in *Vanity Fair*—I will not answer for the exact words



of the sentence but he addresses the reader and points out to him that nothing appears above the waves, and that if he choose to look under them, well, he, Thackeray is not responsible for what may be seen there.

MOORE. What terrible thing will he perceive? An adultery in Mayfair! The magnificent Rawdon overthrowing the Marquis on the hearth-rug, and flinging the jewels, the tokens of his wife's sin, in the nobleman's face.

GOSSE. A very theatrical scene, no doubt; altogether false, no doubt, but it is not easy to say what Rawdon should have done in the circumstances unless, indeed, he had adopted the grammatical pose related in the *Chronicles of French gallantries* touching le Marquis de la Perdrigonde who on returning home found his wife in the arms of a lover, an Englishman. I'm wrong, he was a German, and it was therefore quite natural that he should strike an attitude as soon as he was dressed and declare his intention to leave the room. "Il fallait que je m'en aille" he said. "Il fallait que je m'en allasse," the Marquis de la Perdrigonde corrected. This grammatical unraveling of an awkward situation is not possible in English, owing to the leanness of our verbal system. But though our language is possessed of little grammar, the possibility of writing so as

to defy criticism may be doubted. Landor took pleasure in reproving the ghost of Cicero for mistakes in Latin; in the person of Horne Tooke he reproved Dr. Johnson, forcing him into an admission that he had constructed a sentence negligently; and it was only the other day that you came here with a bunch of mistakes gathered from Landor and Pater and myself; if I were to search your works I should not return with empty hands. But the mistakes of the illustrious ones, and perhaps my own obscure errors, are, if I may say so, different from the vulgarisms which are to be found in Thackeray, who perhaps is guilty of more than any writer of equal importance.

MOORE. But is he important?

GOSSE. I am afraid we shall have to leave the centuries to decide that point. Meanwhile a word upon a personal matter, if it be not judged unseemly to interrupt a purely literary discussion for so slight a cause. You reproved me for my praise of Jane Eyre saying that I yielded to popular clamor, but whatever truth there may be in this contention, you will allow that my acceptance of Thackeray as a writer in keeping with the high tradition of our literature is fainthearted. We pass easily from Thackeray to Trollope.

[To be continued]

GEORGE MOORE.

## Roads to Freedom

BERTRAND RUSSELL is one of the encouraging phenomena of this disintegrating age. Some of us heard him at Columbia in 1915, speaking with a delicate Emersonian ethereality on *Our Knowledge of the External World*: for more than an hour he assured us that the benches on which we sat really existed; and then he melted timidly away into a neighboring office haven. He was a thin, dry specimen of a man, innocuously academic; surely not many of us suspected that this already reverend epistemologist (he is nearly fifty) would ever perpetrate any startling mischief in the political world. We heard that he belonged to one of the "noblest" families of England; that, being a second son, he had escaped an earldom by an heir's breadth; and that he had taken to a weird infinitesimal-calculus philosophy, presumably because philosophy, being still for the most part useless, was still for the most part respectable. And then a year later came *Justice in War-Time*, full of unprofessorial passion and pertinence. Many of us ignored the new volume; an author's followers do not readily permit him to deviate from his past. When, after another year, an American publisher brought out *Principles*

of Social Reconstruction—under the misleading and sensational title, *Why Men Fight*—Russell lost a small public and found a large one; for now he was speaking not only to intellects, which are rare, but to hearts, which are everywhere. The Haves read the book because it psychoanalyzed them painlessly; the Have-nots read it because here was their eternal hope come back to them in language eloquent as sincerity and clear as the eyes of love. All the world looked up, like a multiplied Diogenes, at this Daniel come to judgment; what could such a naively honest fellow be doing in this mad world, at this maddest of all mad times? One almost envied him his honesty; for honesty is a luxury which most of us can ill afford.

Since then the romance has taken form with the few items that have slipped through the fingers of the censor: that the timid philosopher had all the governing classes of England scared to pettiness, and had been quarantined to prevent the spread of his curious infection; that he had not been allowed to come again to America, for fear that even an ocean voyage would not make him give up his new philosophy; that in a more or less gentlemanly way

he was kept in semi-bondage, like another Galileo, also insisting that the world does move. He was lost to us for a while, silent in a shouting world; until last month, when we were told how the strikers at Glasgow asked Russell to come and address them; how the British Government so feared the little man's power of thought and truth that they forbade him to go; how Robert Smillie spoke instead (with unwonted purity of diction), reading from a manuscript; and having finished said, "That, ladies and gentlemen, is what Mr. Russell would have said if he had been permitted to be present here tonight." And now comes another Russell book, *Proposed Roads to Freedom: Socialism, Anarchism, and Syndicalism* (Holt, \$1.50), and from a stray sentence here and there we perceive that the philosopher has borne his segregation philosophically: "Few are able to see through the apparent evils of an outcast's life to the inner joy that comes of faith and creative hope."

It is a quiet book, dealing though it does with movements that are making no little noise at present in the world. There is first a chapter on socialism, aptly defined as "the advocacy of communal ownership of land and capital"; there is a critical analysis of the central concepts of Marxism—economic interpretation, class war, and the concentration of capital; and there is the usual account of the break-up of socialism into state capitalism on the one hand and syndicalism on the other. Russell points out the difficulties of a socialism resting on the "democratic" state as at present organized: "The actual experience of democratic representative government is very disillusioning," he writes in his polite way; and the notion of the state as universal employer is about as pleasant as the idea of conscription. "Socialists . . . imagine that the Socialist State will be governed by men like those who now advocate it. This is, of course, a delusion. . . . Those who hold power after the reform has been carried out are likely to belong, in the main, to the ambitious executive type which has in all ages possessed itself of the government of the nations. And this type has never shown itself tolerant of opposition or friendly to freedom."

There follows a sympathetic account of anarchism as taught by Bakunin and Kropotkin; the indications of this chapter are that Russell has, during his domestic exile, re-read Kropotkin, and has almost been carried away by the sweet reasonableness of the man. Like Jefferson, Russell thinks that a violent uprising now and then is a good national tonic, and has some value as educative drama; but "in labor movements generally, success through violence can hardly be expected except in circumstances where success without violence is attainable." Rus-

sell inclines much more towards the syndicalism of Pelloutier and Lagardelle than toward the socialism of Hyndman and Wells and Shaw; but he wonders whether the solidarity of labor on which the movement would base itself is not even more of a myth than the general strike. Many English workingmen, he points out, have been made conservative by the investments which they or their unions have placed in capitalistic enterprises, as well as by their share, however slight, in the benefit accruing from the exploitation of backward countries. And in America "the older skilled workers, largely American born, have long been organized in the American Federation of Labor under Mr. Gompers. These represent an aristocracy of labor. They tend to work with the employers against the great mass of unskilled immigrants, and they cannot be regarded as forming part of anything that could truly be called a labor movement." This statement may appear extreme, in the light of the recent semi-syndicalistic proposals of the American railway unions; but it is helpful to see how matters American look at a distance which lends perspective to the view. Russell concludes that syndicalism takes account of men only as producers, just as state socialism takes account of men only as consumers; and accepts the plan of the Guild Socialists to reconcile the two. "The system which they advocate is, I believe, the best hitherto proposed, and the one most likely to secure liberty without constant appeals to violence."

"To secure liberty"—that to Russell is the supreme purpose of all political organization and thought. He approaches the social question always from the point of view of the artist, and tests each plan by asking "What will it do to art?" He continues to use as the center of his political thinking the distinction between the creative and the possessive dispositions; and his Utopia is a system of checks to possession and incentives to creation. Under Guild Socialism, he thinks, men will come to be valued not by the quantity but by the quality of their product; there will be a minimum wage for all, even for those who will not work; the creative impulse, the constructive disposition, may be trusted to keep all but a few men busy (but, one wonders, busy at the work that is most needed, or only at the work that is most pleasant?); every industry will be controlled by the men engaged in it, except in its external relations, which will fall for adjudication to some central body; there will be very little government, very little law or compulsion; an international economic congress will take the place of war as the arbiter in commercial and territorial disputes; invention will be stimulated by permitting each guild to monopolize for a time the advantages,

of any processes which it may introduce; and everywhere the artist will be crowned as the most deserving of men. It is a pleasant Utopia, but not to be had for the asking.

Indeed, if one may now add a word of criticism, the impression left by the book is one of oversimplicity and unreality; it has about it an air of jejune and ideologic youth. It has all of Kropotkin's gentleness and many of his delusions; but it has little of Kropotkin's patient grappling with difficult details. It has beauty, such as one has come to expect of Bertrand Russell; but it is a fragile beauty: a sentence or two from Nietzsche, one fears, would smash it into sweet regrets. There is here no consideration of the powerful competitive impulses of men, their love of inequality and difference, their lust for domination; one would think that "natural selection" and "the will to power" had been quite annihilated by "mutual aid." One looks, in such a discussion, for some resolute consideration of what are the forces, psychological and economic, that make against, as well as those that make for, our

social ends; what the relative strength of these forces is; and how intelligence may bend them into some progressive synthesis. Indeed, these "roads to freedom" are not roads at all, but goals—and thought must find the way.

To find fault after this fashion is no pleasant task, and a paragraph of it will do. These deductions made, the book still retains exceptional worth: it is refreshingly simple and kindly; here at last our various economic isms meet without fratricidal strife; here is an honest estimate of them by a man who has loved and loves them all. "Meantime," says the author, ending in a flash of poetry that disarms and almost nullifies all criticism, "the world in which we exist has other aims. But it will pass away, burnt up in the fire of its own hot passions; and from its ashes will spring a new and younger world, full of fresh hope, with the light of morning in its eyes." When that new world comes men will not forget to honor Bertrand Russell.

WILL DURANT.

### *Vox—et Praeterea?*

IT WILL BE RECALLED that when the Imagists first came upon us they carried banners, and that upon one of them was inscribed their detestation of the "cosmic," and of the "cosmic" poet, who (they added) "seems to us to shirk the real difficulties of his art." No doubt if the Imagists were to issue this particular volume again they would find occasion to alter this and perhaps other statements, for here as elsewhere they sinned against one of their own cardinal doctrines—they failed to think clearly and, ipso facto, failed also to define with precision. Were they quite sure what they meant by the term "cosmic" poet? Did they mean, for example, Dante—or only Ella Wheeler Wilcox? The point is trifling, it may be, and yet it is not without its interest, for it indicates an error characteristic of the moment. It was not unnatural that those of our poetic revolutionaries who, tired of the verbose sentimentalities and ineptitudes of the more mediocre among their predecessors, determined to achieve a sharper picturism in poetry should in the first excited survey of the situation decide that anything "cosmic," or let us say philosophic, was obviously beyond the focus of their poetic camera—could not be "picturized." It appeared that thought would have to be excluded—and in fact for a year or more, under the influence of the Imagists, the markets were flooded with a free verse in which thought was conspicuously at a minimum. "Pure sensation!" was the cry—a cry which has been heard be-

fore, and will be heard again; it arises from a question almost as old as poetry itself—the question whether the poet should be only a drifting sensorium, and merely feel, or whether he should be permitted to think. Should he be a voice, simply—or something beside? Should he occasionally, to put it colloquially, say something? Or should he be merely a magic lantern, casting colored pictures forever on a screen?

The question is put perhaps too starkly, and purposely leaves out of account all of the minute gradations by which one passes from the one extreme to the other. And the occasion for the question is Mr. Maxwell Bodenheim, who, though already well known as a poet, has just published his first book, *Minna and Myself* (Pagan; \$1.25). Mr. Bodenheim might well, it appears, have been one of the Imagists. None of them, with perhaps the exception of "H. D.," can equal his delicate precision of phrasing. None of them is more subtly pictorial. Moreover Mr. Bodenheim's theories as to the nature of poetry (for which he has adroitly argued), such as that it should be a "colored grace" and that it should bear no relation to "human beliefs and fundamental human feelings," might seem even more clearly to define that affinity. Yet it would be a great mistake to ticket Mr. Bodenheim as an Imagist merely because his poetry is sharply pictorial, or because he has declared that poetry should not deal with fundamental human emotions. As a



matter of fact his theory and performance are two very different things. One has not gone very far before detecting in him a curious dualism of personality.

It is obvious, of course, that Mr. Bodenheim has taken out of the air much that the Imagists and other radicals have set in circulation. His poems are in the freest of free verse: they are indeed quite candidly without rhyme or metrical rhythm, and resolve themselves for the most part into series of lucid and delicate statements, of which the crisp cadences are only perhaps the cadences of a very sensitive prose. It is to Mr. Bodenheim's credit that despite the heavy handicap of such a form he makes poems. How does he do this? Not merely by evoking sharp-edged images—if he did only that he would be indeed simply an exponent of "colored grace" or Imagism—but precisely because his exquisite pictures are not merely pictures, but symbols. And the things they symbolize are, oddly enough, these flouted "fundamental feelings."

Mr. Bodenheim is, in short, a symbolist. His poems are almost invariably presentations of mood, evanescent and tenuous—tenuous, frequently, to the point of impalpability—in terms of the visual or tactile; and if it would be an exaggeration to say that they differ from the purely imagistic type of poetry by being, for this reason, essentially emotional, nevertheless such a statement approximates the truth. Perhaps rather one should say that they are the ghosts of emotions, or the perfumes of them. It is at this point that one guesses Mr. Bodenheim's dualism. For it seems as if the poet were at odds with the theorist: as if the poet desired to betray these "fundamental emotions" to a greater extent than the severe theorist will permit. In consequence one feels that Mr. Bodenheim has cheated not only his reader but also himself. He gives us enough to show us that he is one of the most original of contemporary poets, but one feels that out of sheer perversity he has withheld even more than he has given. There are many poets who have the *vox et praeterea nihil* of poetry, and who wisely therefore cultivate that kind of charm; but it is a tragedy when a poet such as Mr. Bodenheim, possessing other riches as well, ignores these riches in credulous obedience to the theory that, since it is the voice, the hover, the overtone, the perfume alone which is important in poetry, therefore poetry is to be sought rather in the gossamer than in the rock. Mr. Bodenheim has taken the first step: he has found that moods can be magically described—no less than dew and roses. But poetic magic, as George Santayana has said, is chiefly a matter of perspective—it is the revelation of "sweep in the concise and depth in the clear"—and, as Santayana

points out, if this is true we need not be surprised to perceive that the poet will find greatest scope for this faculty in dealing with ideas, particularly with philosophic ideas. . . . And we return to our old friend the "cosmic."

Nor need Mr. Bodenheim be unduly alarmed. For when one suggests that the contemplation of life as a whole, or the recognition of its items as merely minute sand-grains of that whole, or an occasional recollection of man's twinkling unimportance, or a fleeting glimpse of the cruel perfection of the order of things are among the finest headlands from which the poet may seek an outlook, one is certainly not suggesting that poets should be logicians. It is not the paraphernalia but the vision of philosophy which is sublime. If the poet's business is vision, he can ill afford to ignore this watch-tower. For if, like Mr. Bodenheim, he desires that poetry shall be a kind of absolute music, "unattached with surface sentiment"—a music in which sensations are the notes, emotions the harmonies, and ideas the counterpoint; a music of detached waver and gleam, which, taking for granted a complete knowledge of all things, will not be so naive as to make statements, or argue a point, or praise the nature of things, or inveigh against it, but will simply employ all such elements as the keys to certain tones—then truly the keyboard of the poet who uses his brain as well as his sensorium will be immensely greater than that, let us say, of the ideal Imagist.

The point has been elaborated because, as has been said, it is one on which Mr. Bodenheim seems to be at odds with himself: the poems in *Minna and Myself* show him to be an adept at playing with moods, an intrepid juggler with sensations, but one who tends to repeat his tricks, and to juggle always with the same set of balls. Of the poems themselves what more needs to be said than that they are among the most delicately tinted and fantastically subtle of contemporary poems in free verse? Mr. Bodenheim's sensibility is as unique in its way as that of Wallace Stevens or of T. S. Eliot or of Alfred Kreymborg. One need not search here for the robust, nor for the seductively rhythmic, nor for the enkindling. Mr. Bodenheim's patterns are cool almost to the point of preciosity; they are, so to speak, only one degree more fused than mosaics. They must be read with sympathy or not at all. And one feels that Mr. Bodenheim is only at his beginning, and that he will eventually free himself of his conventions on the score of rhythm (with which he is experimenting tentatively) and of theme-color. In what direction these broadenings will lead him, only Mr. Bodenheim can discover. One is convinced, however, that he can step out with security.

CONRAD AIKEN.

## *Dublin, March 6*

THE RECORDS OF THE IRISH Literary "Movement" will be scanned in vain for any reference to Mr. Forrest Reid, who has just published *A Garden by the Sea: Stories and Sketches* (Talbot Press; Dublin)—his first book to appear with an Irish imprint. Indeed, there must be many who have read his remarkable novels of Ulster character, *The Bracknells*, *Following Darkness*, and *At the Door of the Gate*, without knowing that the author is an Irishman, living in Belfast. Although Mr. Reid was a contributor to *Uladh*, the quarterly journal of the Ulster Literary Theater in its heroic period, he has never associated himself with any of the groups in Ireland whose regionalism has given them prominence. In fact, so determined is he to escape the stigma which he conceives attaching to that word, that he surpassed himself by writing an excellent study of W. B. Yeats from which all reference to the literary renaissance in Ireland is omitted. Mr. Forrest Reid is, therefore, a further instance of that diversity which, as I mentioned in my last letter, distinguishes Belfast from Dublin. One is constantly surprised to discover, isolated here and there in that brazenly provincial town, a number of talented writers who crave neither the support nor the society of their more widely advertised colleagues "south of the Boyne." Where the South is gregarious, the North is unsociable, and literature is a vice one cultivates unknown to one's friends. How unlike the intellectual communism of the Dublin literati, whose existence excites the half contemptuous wonder of British explorers!

It is difficult to obtain the works of Mr. Reid in the bookshops of his native city, and as for the publications of the "mere Irish," they are procurable only "to order"—that exasperating formula. One can only hope that the Irish imprint will not altogether ruin the author's credit with the suspicious vendors of British best-sellers in Belfast. The superstitious fear of these gentlemen lest their shelves be contaminated with Sinn Féin literature has even less justification in this case than in that of the majority of the writers thus boycotted, for there is not the faintest trace of the national self-consciousness which is so terrifying to the Carsonian imagination. Mr. Forrest Reid is, I believe, the only articulate Irishman who has no feeling for politics, and no interest in any party to the Anglo-Irish struggle. There is an authentic record of the fact—incredible to us—that he was in Larne when Sir Edward Carson's rebels landed their arms in 1914, but retired to sleep in utter oblivion to the seemingly

meaningless commotion, although the loyal insurrectionaries had overpowered the authorities and taken possession of the town. The gun-runners of Larne, and those who emulated them at such cost in Dublin later, will scrutinize the pages of *A Garden by the Sea* in vain for heresies or propaganda. Mr. Reid has no passion but that of the writer for his craft. He gives to literature what others have devoted to ward politics and geographical patriotism. Even the two camps into which his admirers have divided will have to agree as to the merits of this book, for each will find the necessary material to prove that the author is a romantic or a realist. *Courage*, *The Truant*, and the title-story are perfect examples of that fanciful, imaginative style which, while never wholly absent from the work of Mr. Reid, predominates so far in certain cases as to mark off his stories into the two classes referred to. On the other hand, his realistic manner is well illustrated in *The Reconciliation*, *The Accomplice*, and *An Ulster Farm*—to mention the more important stories.

If this selection had been made for the special purpose of shaking the assurance of the author's critics, it could not have been better devised to that end. While it is easy to assert—if one incline that way—that *The Bracknells* and *At the Door of the Gate* are better than *The Spring Song* and *The Gentle Lover*, the choice is by no means so simple between, say, *A Garden by the Sea* and *An Ulster Farm*. On the whole, an admirer of the realist must confess that the romanticist has triumphed in the present volume. Every story is carefully and beautifully written, with the ease and deftness of a practiced artist, but of necessity the realist is more dependent upon his material for his effects, and as it happens, the substance of the realistic sketches is slight. At this point precisely, the artistry of the writer triumphs where the themes are such as must rely entirely upon craftsmanship for their success. Such sketches as *An Ending*, with its evocation of dying Bruges, or *A Garden by the Sea*, with its reveries over childhood—with what should they hold the reader but the suggestive, brooding harmony of style and mood? The incident narrated derives in each case its sole interest from the author's power of investing the subject with the glamour of the moment in which his imagination was stirred. It is just the faculty of conveying the impalpable suggestion of a singularly sensitive imagination which constitutes the beauty of this writing. When, as in *Following Darkness*, Mr. Forrest Reid

has a theme which calls for the employment of all his arts, then he gives us what we must so far regard as his masterpiece. None of the qualities which distinguish the author's contribution to contemporary literature is absent from this miniature of his work, and he has emancipated himself from the derivative influences which threatened at one time to mar the eerie effect of such a conception as *The Truant*, now presented in an original and truly characteristic manner, without Machenesque accretions.

The latest addition to the greatly prized series of books issued by Miss E. C. Yeats at the Cuala Press is the *Kiltartan Poetry Book*, by Lady Gregory. It is a collection of folksongs translated from the Irish, and reprinted, for the most part, from Cuchulain of Muirthemne, Gods and Fighting Men, Saints and Wonders, and Poets and Dreamers. The volume is a reminder of the changes which have taken place since the works in question first appeared. The most recent is twelve years old, and all of them preceded the world fame which Synge brought to the peasant idiom, in which he and Lady Gregory, following Dr. Douglas Hyde, created a new literary convention. Not the least of time's effects has been to produce in Ireland a reaction in certain quarters against the Gaelicized English which these writers employed. We have developed a tendency to speak disparagingly of Kiltartanese, and if Synge's established glory protects him from the carping of the disaffected, the living exponents of the style have to bear the brunt of hostile criticism. Two influences have been at work undermining the prestige of Kiltartan speech. To take the lesser first: there have arisen new idols—worshipped, at least, in the circles most loudly anti-Kiltartan—and they are credited with an exactness of knowledge of the peasant and his idiom beside which Synge is classed as mere literature. It is solemnly argued that no peasant actually talks like *The Playboy of the Western World*—as if Synge had ever undertaken to compile a species of Congressional Record of the Aran Islands. There is, of course, no virtue in phonographic records of unilluminating talk, whether of peasants or politicians. When we have analyzed the technique of Synge, we have by no means disposed of his art. The writer of genius must know how to transform and transcend reality, so that we lose sight of his convention in the profound beauty of his ultimate effects.

At this point arises the second, and more serious, influence in the process of discredit which has threatened the literary use of Anglo-Irish idiom. Like so many other conventions, it has been overworked, and we are suffering from a prolonged acquaintance

with the mere mechanism of the style, divorced from real beauty of thought or form. For the one occasion when the public has an opportunity of admiring the highest expression of Kiltartan speech, there are dozens when only its cheapest manifestations are available—notably in the later comedies and melodramas of the popular peasant playwrights. These have become almost as dull and unbearable as the jargon of the old-fashioned stage Irishman. In fact we are tiring of a new-fashioned stage Irishman, for precisely the same reason as we wearied of his predecessor. Both fail to correspond to anything in our experience, and both fail to stimulate the imagination. If the "folk speech" of our present day literature is not quite so horrible as the abominable dialect of the earlier writers, it is because it is saved by its genuine relation to a cultivated and subtle tongue. But this Gaelicized English cannot survive apart from the work it clothes, any more than the lesser Elizabethans could hope to dispute the final supremacy of Shakespeare. Purely verbal substitutes for style and matter cannot deceive, and it is the most short-sighted reaction which prompts this condemnation of the language of *The Playboy*, because every imitator is not a Synge.

Those who read Mr. Dermot O'Byrne's *Children of the Hills*, when it was published by Messrs. Maunsell some years ago, will readily understand that his new book of short stories, entitled *Wrack* (Talbot Press), has aroused the Kiltartan controversy in many places. Mr. H. G. Wells once threatened to publish no more short stories because of the incorrigible belief of all reviewers that only Maupassant could write short stories. The superstition that only Synge could use the peasant idiom of Anglo-Irish is a somewhat similar bogey, with which Mr. O'Byrne is threatened, but fortunately he has not been afraid to offer the public a second collection of those fine tales, whose imagination, poetry, and dialectical vigor showed that he had mastered for prose narrative the medium of Synge, the dramatist. These six stories illustrate most admirably the author's wide range of imagination, from modern realism to historical reconstruction, and including visionary phantasy. Mr. O'Byrne's method is authentic; his knowledge of Irish, combined with an intimate contact with the scenes and people he describes, gives to his work the color and raciness which cannot be captured by the mechanical Kiltartanizers. His stories are so obvious a demonstration of the absurdity of the theory that Anglo-Irish is the speech of mere comedy, their power is so challenging in its defiant idiomatic technique, that adverse criticism has taken refuge in the old trench of patriotic puritanism from which Synge was bombarded. Mr.



O'Byrne is accused of calumniating the Gael—and this in spite of the fact that a recent book of his verse, *A Ballad of Dublin* (Candle Press), which was suppressed by the Censor, has been described by W. B. Yeats as containing the best poem inspired by the Rising of Easter Week 1916.

Another victim of that functionary is the pseudonymous "D. L. Kay," whose *Glamour of Dublin* (Talbot Press) has attracted the greatest attention, as the most original of the innumerable books to which this city has supplied a theme. It is a collection of impressionistic sketches, some actual, others historical, many fantastical. The first chapter, which purports to give the impressions of Parnell during Easter Week, as he watched the Sinn Fein stronghold in O'Connell Street from his pedestal at the top of that thoroughfare, was the occasion of the Censor's interference. The closing paragraph was blue-penciled because of the suggestion that Padraic Pearse was not ejected from the portal of heaven, but was greeted with "Pass, friend" as he entered the "seraphic gates, wherever, east of the moon, the jasper hinges turn." As the missing paragraph was printed in an English periodical, with appropriate comment, it will doubtless

be discreet to quote these words from it. In another chapter the words "even now" were deleted from a reference to the grave of Wolfe Tone, "where he lies, dreaming, even now, of Irish freedom." The book however does not depend upon these extraneous humors of British government in Ireland for its interest. It is a unique series of "promenades of an impressionist," who has a delightful gift of irony and an amazing fund of precise topographical lore at his disposal, both of which are so adroitly insinuated that the reader discovers, only when he has ceased chuckling, that he has been given an extraordinary glimpse of the subtleties of our peculiar history. The description of Queen Victoria and her husband scrawling their names in ink upon an illuminated page of the priceless Book of Kells, is a masterpiece, which has been duly appreciated. Out of the purest altruism one hopes that *The Glamour of Dublin* will not be missed by English readers who, it appears, are looking coldly upon Irish and Russian literature because of the political heterodoxy of these two countries. So, in literature as in politics, our hope lies with America.

ERNEST A. BOYD.

### *Visitants*

Clothed in delight, these dreams will come  
And lean above another's bed,  
Nor care whose earthy lips are dumb,  
Nor care what dreamer's dead.

Dew-lidded girls, as straight and slim  
As poplars are in April—oh!  
They will be there to trouble him,  
And I shall never know!

And he, perhaps, will rise and stand  
Bare-browed beneath the moon and stars,  
His will a very rope of sand,  
In Night's old lupanars.

You golden temptresses, you fair,  
Foam-breasted phantoms of desire,  
Give him your cup of sweet despair,  
Chasten his flesh with fire!

Draw him a draught of Circe's wine,  
Scatter an incense through his sleep—  
For then you cannot trouble mine,  
That will be far too deep.

LESLIE NELSON JENNINGS.

# THE DIAL

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT, *Editor*

CLARENCE BRITTEN

HAROLD STEARNS

*In Charge of the Reconstruction Program:*

THORSTEIN VEBLEN

GEORGE DONLIN

JOHN DEWEY

HELEN MAROT

**B**OLSHEVISM IS A MENACE TO THE VESTED INTERESTS OF privilege and property. This is the golden text which illuminates the policies pursued by the statesmen of the Great Powers in all their dealings with Soviet Russia. Not that this axiom of imperialist statecraft is formally written into the Covenant of the League. It is only that the policies pursued by the Elder Statesmen of the Great Powers have impeccably followed its line. What is formally written into the documents is the broad principle of self-determination. But in the measures taken by the Elder Statesmen, unasked, for the regularization of Soviet Russia there enters no shadow of regard for the principle of self-determination. All of which appears quite reasonable and regular so soon as it is illuminated by this golden text of the Elder Statesmen, that Bolshevism is a menace to the vested interests of privilege and property. The high merit as well as the high necessity of the resulting maneuvers of repression may be taken for granted as a matter of course. No question of the merit of these maneuvers is admitted either by the substantial citizens or by their safe and sane statesmen. But it may still be in order to entertain a question as to what measures had best be taken in these premises, considering the means in hand and the circumstances of the case, considering the difficulties of any effectual intervention and the uneasy temper of the underlying peoples with which these Elder Statesmen will have to make up their account.

The Russian situation is by no means simple and its details are sufficiently obscure. Yet the outlines of it are visible in a large way, and it is not without a certain consistency. And it is a perplexing situation that faces the Elder Statesmen of the Great Powers. By and large Soviet Russia is self-supporting, beyond any other considerable body of population in Europe, and it is correspondingly difficult to regulate by forcible measures from outside. The Russian people at large are still in a "backward state" industrially. So that they are used to depending on a home-grown food supply and on local and household industry for the ordinary necessities of life in the way of clothing, shelter, fuel, and transport. At the same time they also have the use of something appreciable in the way of a machine industry, widely scattered both along their borders and through the country inland—enough to serve somewhat sparingly as a sufficient auxiliary to their

farm and household industry in case of urgent need. It follows that any protracted continuation of the existing blockade of imports will scarcely starve Soviet Russia into submission. In fact it could scarcely do more than starve the remnants of the vested interests in Russia. This would hold true even in the improbable event that the Great Powers should succeed in closing the ports of the Pacific, Baltic, and Black Sea to all sea-borne trade. To hold such a country in a perpetual stage of siege would scarcely be a profitable enterprise, since there is no prospect of a favorable outcome, and since a perpetuation of this state of siege would bring no gain to the vested interests in whose behalf the enterprise is undertaken. At the same time an extensive campaign of occupation and forcible control promises no better solution, inasmuch as the Soviet Republic is proving to be quite formidable in the field, and since the amorphous country on which it draws is not vulnerable in any vital part. It has the defects of its qualities, but it has also the qualities of its defects. It is incapable of serious aggression, but it is also incapable of conclusive defeat by force.

Meantime Soviet Russia offers an attractive market for such American products as machine tools and factory equipment, railway material and rolling stock, electrical supplies, farm implements and tools, textiles, wrought leather goods, certain foodstuffs and certain metals; and at the same time there is waiting a large volume of export trade, including such things as grain and other foodstuffs, flax, hemp, and lumber. Should the blockade be maintained for any time it is not to be doubted that the illicit trade into Soviet Russia in all these things will rise to unexampled proportions—to the very substantial profit of the Scandinavians and other expert smugglers and blockade runners. Meantime, too, the Great Powers whose national integrity has now been provisionally stabilized by America's decisive participation in the war are placing an embargo on the import of many articles into the European market—in practical effect an embargo on the importation of these American products for which Soviet Russia is now making a cash offer. Soviet Russia is today the only country that places no obstacles in the way of import trade. So it becomes an interesting question: How long will those American vested interests which derive an income from

foreign trade have the patience to forego an assured profit from open trade with Soviet Russia in order to afford certain European vested interests a dubiously problematical chance to continue getting something for nothing in the way of class privilege and unearned income?

**D**URING THE WAR THE FABLE OF THE SYBILLINE books was frequently quoted, always with reference to the diminishing opportunity afforded the Central Powers for a peace of repentance and pardon. It is the irony of history that the fable has acquired a new application—this time to the victorious powers themselves. It is to them that the fateful figure appears offering her books of prophecy, nine, six, three. And the question with each diminished opportunity is more insistent. On January 25, *THE DIAL* said: "The fundamental necessity for a better world is a sacrifice of the instinct for possession. . . . If predatory instincts sway the Conference to concern itself chiefly with demands for territory, indemnity, and commercial privilege on the part of the victors—then indeed the rulers of the world will have proved once more their unfitness, and this time the people cannot be deceived." The events of the past two months seem to have justified the second part of this prophecy. Unquestionably predatory instincts have governed the Conference. The talk which has emanated from Paris has been of how much Germany can pay, of shutting her off from raw materials, of granting the Saar Valley and the left bank of the Rhine to France, Danzig to Poland, and of extending the Italian frontier to the Brenner. Even the Covenant of the League of Nations, which should have been a means of reconciliation, was presented in the guise of an alliance of the victorious nations, and the generous interpretation which should have relieved it of this character has not been forthcoming. And the inevitable has happened. Hungary, frightened by an unwarrantable extension of the terms of the Armistice, and threatened with dismemberment, has followed the example of France in 1792, has committed her national existence directly to her people. Whether the social solvent of the Soviet form of government will suffice to hold in solution the various races with nationalistic ambitions which Hungary includes is not yet certain. But in any case the moving finger has written another syllable of the mene, mene, tekel, upharsin on the walls within which Belshazzar keeps his feast at Paris. Upon President Wilson, as upon no other of the Allied statesmen, the responsibility rests. It is fair to say that all the questions which have delayed peace and made Paris a Babel of discord were settled in principle by the statement of war aims which he gave to his allies and to his enemies. They were accepted by the former with full acquiescence, in spite of his invitation to them to discuss or dissent. They were

understood by the latter and thus became a part of that political, or rather moral, offensive which contributed to their undoing. Above all they were addressed to his fellow countrymen as the interpretation of the cause for which they were fighting. To all—allies, enemies, and fellow-citizens—President Wilson assumed obligations of the most solemn kind, involving not only his own personal honor but the honor of his country. He knows this, as he knows the result if he fail. The fateful words of his Boston speech were spoken in solemn remembrance of the power which he has invoked: "They [the people] are in the saddle, and they are going to see to it that if the present governments do not do their will, some other governments shall."

**A** SINISTER NOTE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE Conference is the fact that the four leading partners have taken frankly to the practice of secret negotiation, and it is significant that this is coincident with the revolution in Hungary. They are confronted by a second people choosing the path of immediate self-determination, and their decision what course to take is apparently not to be an "open covenant openly arrived at." But this case differs from the Russian situation in that the secrecy cannot long be maintained, and the action of the representatives at Paris will be subject to quick consideration and revision by the people whom they represent. Should the conferees undertake the forcible suppression of Soviet and other efforts at self-determination there will be war, unorganized war as well as organized. In such war the bitter-enders will fight. If a reign of terror overwhelms Europe the responsibility will fall on the Supreme Council for its failure to recognize that the real forces of reorganization are to be found within the movements of the people. These movements are not comparable, as the Councilors seem to believe, to a general strike in one or more industries. The colossal proportions of the movement as a whole have to do not only with its extent but with its character. It is a movement in which people know what they want and, as they are opposed, will arm and fight to get it. Military repression of this particular kind of want intensifies the desire for it and induces the support of those who were neutral. Blockades become boomerangs, since hunger and deprivation feed such movements. The present movement in Central Europe and Great Britain is an indication of an international consciousness of common interest. Before the people have had time to recover themselves from the exhaustions of war they are faced with the startling fact that the self-determination for which they fought has not been won; that neither the Peace Conference nor the Supreme Council has given a sign of granting it. When the statesmen who represented the old order directed their appeal to the people in terms of altruistic patriotism they little



guessed the forces with which they were conjuring. The people answered the appeal to arms and fought for a different kind of world, a world in which democracy was to be lived for rather than died for. This current which is rising with uncontrollable power is free of old diplomacy and political domination; to dam it means world catastrophe. What it needs is time; a chance to harness and generate power more potent in human welfare than devices of statecraft hatched in the capitals of the old world, which is passing.

"SABOTAGE" IS ONE OF THE LATE AND FORMIDABLE loan-words of the English language. At the same time it has also some currency in other languages, as would be expected in the case of a loan-word which fills so notable a place in common speech, since the facts which call for the use of such a new word are sure to range beyond the frontiers of any one language. In all this the word has the company of such other late comers as "camouflage" and "bolshivism." And not much different is the case of such late-come, home-bred terms as "graft" and "goodwill," and "intangible assets" and "vested interests." Whether they are borrowed from abroad or are made over from innocent home-grown words, all these half-technical terms that are making their way into common use to describe notable facts lack that sharp definition that belongs to words of the ancient line. There is always something of metaphor or analogy about them, and the meaning attached to their use in common speech is neither precise nor uniform. They are still more or less unfamiliar; they seem uncouth and alien, but they make good their intrusion into the language by becoming indispensable. They are needed for present use to describe facts which are very much in evidence and which are not otherwise provided for.

Of course, the facts described by such late word-growths as "graft," "sabotage," "camouflage," or "bolshivism" are not altogether new, nor nearly so; but they count for more now than they have done in the past, and so it has become necessary to find words for them. As a fact of history, graft is at least as old as the early Egyptian dynasties, and sabotage is quite inseparable from the price system, so that its beginnings can scarcely fail to be as ancient as the love of money. It is perhaps the first-born of those evils that have been said to be rooted in the love of money. Doubtless graft and sabotage have been running along together through human history from its beginning. We should all find it very difficult to get our bearings in any period of history or any state of society which might by any chance not be shot through with both. Still those ancients who passed before the last quarter of the nineteenth century had not the use of these technical terms to describe the facts, with which

they seem all the while to have been familiar enough. It may have been because the facts of graft and sabotage, however massive and wide-reaching they doubtless were in those past times, did not, after all, then stand out in such bold relief on the face of things. But things have moved forward since then. And quite plainly now, since the price system and all its ways, means, and ends have reached that mature development which is familiar to this generation, both of these terms have become indispensable in common and current speech.

IN CONGRESS THE PRACTICE OF SABOTAGE HAS long enjoyed another imported and figurative name, also drawn from footgear—"filibuster," the onomatopoeic equivalent of "freebooter." Respectable as familiarity has made this political device, it is by intent and effect sheer sabotage. Witness the present plight of the Railroad Administration and other bureaus, deprived of their necessary and in most cases unopposed appropriations because the late Congress, in order to force an extra session in which to protect its constitutional function in foreign affairs, deliberately refused to perform its domestic functions and adjourned without providing funds to keep the governmental machine running during its absence. With a touching solicitude the Congressmen provided for the salaries of their secretaries, but they made no provision for their wage-workers in the lobbies of the two chambers. And while they take the spring air in cities whose street-cleaning departments do not depend upon federal appropriation, the government clerks they have left behind in Washington walk to work that is, in many cases, temporarily unpaid, through streets that are unswept because Congress went on strike. Nobody believes, of course, that the governmental machine will stop for lack of the withheld fuel; and in most departments the results of the Congressional strike will be more ludicrous than important. One bureau however has been throttled in its hour of utmost need. The Federal Employment Service suddenly finds itself with funds to operate less than sixty of its seven hundred placement agencies, and must appeal to states and municipalities to keep open as many of these offices as possible. Its personnel, recently assembled at great pains, is again scattered, and its training school closed. Meanwhile demobilization continues and unemployment mounts. At best we have taken too little interest in finding jobs for our war workers and returned soldiers. And congressional tactics that slow down our all too inadequate machinery for returning these hands to productive industry is really—no matter at whom it is directed nor how it is dignified in parliamentary parlance—straight sabotage on business, on labor, and on the people at large, the form of sabotage known as striking on the job.

## Communications

### TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR

MY DEAR MR. BAKER: I enclose a clipping from a report of the discharge of 113 military prisoners from Fort Leavenworth. A well-known woman, a publicist of note, and, I may add, a member of one of the largest and most progressive churches in this city, has just returned from there, where she talked with a number of the prisoners. She reports that the city is one of the vilest in the country. That conditions in the prison are vile goes without saying. Fine, idealistic, clean young men are forced to see before their eyes at all hours of the day the most revolting phases of sodomy; are forced to live in filth; to say nothing of being subjected to the autocratic and brutal activities of men who are not worthy to black their shoes, but who, by virtue of military authority vested in them, can "go the limit" in the endeavor to break the men's spirits!

A young man recently discharged from Fort Leavenworth, speaking to a group recently (with no bitterness of spirit, no exaggeration, but with an almost unbelievable restraint), said that when the military authorities had broken a man's spirit they felt that they had done their duty. *That was success as they saw it*; but think of what it means to the individual, and think of the loss to the manhood of the nation! The man who will suffer for conscience's sake is, as President Wilson said, of unusual spiritual fiber or intellectual independence. And what have we done to hundreds of such men? Some have died; others will never recover physically from the treatment that has been meted out to them—and our government stands before the world, responsible for these crimes!

Is it not time that we, as well as Russia, recognized the worth of human beings in general, and acknowledged the particular worth of these splendid young men who are standing for liberty of conscience—for the democracy that our Constitution outlines, but which our authorities disregard in the most barefaced manner imaginable?

The machinery of release of these political prisoners (to recognize whom, officially, would be to deny the democratic ideals that we have got so far away from) has been some time starting. However can it not be speeded up?

A large audience of relatives and friends gathered last week to hear two speakers on this subject. They want their husbands, and brothers, and sweethearts, and friends back, and they should have them as soon as is humanly possible! A few days' delay may mean death to some, now nearly broken! Two great souls have recently gone—physically too frail to stand the treatment; spiritually too strong to desert their ideals. How many more are to go the same way? The people of the country are putting this question up to you.

BLANCHE WATSON.

New York City, Jan. 23, 1919.

MY DEAR MISS WATSON: Your letter of January 23 has been referred to me.

The War Department immediately upon having conditions at the Disciplinary Barracks called to its attention, instituted an investigation. The report of that investigation disclosed the fact that the trouble at Leavenworth, which centered entirely about two or three men, was due, not at all to the administration of the prison, but to the regulations which were ill adapted to the unusual type of prisoner that the Selective Service Act brought to military prisons. The Secretary at once made some appropriate modifications of those regulations and has called a conference to consider further changes in disciplinary regulations, not only to meet this unusual condition but to bring the Army's disciplinary methods up to the most modern penological standards, in case they shall be found to be deficient. The conference will also consider ways of meeting the immediate emergency of the overcrowding of disciplinary barracks due to the increased size of the Army during the war. The conference will come to its conclusions in the near future and you may be assured that action leading out of its conclusions will be promptly taken.

F. P. KEPPEL,

Third Assistant Secretary.

Washington, D. C., Jan. 28, 1919.

DEAR SIR: The communication received in reply to my letter from the third Assistant Secretary of the Department of Jan. 23 is, may I say, most unsatisfactory, and it is a perfect example, moreover, of the official inefficiency and stupidity that has characterized the activities of the War Department during the past two years.

In the first place it is a "form" letter, supposed to reply to all communications, and in reality replying to none.

In the second place the form is nobody knows how old. Note the phrase "due to the increased size of the army during the war!"

In the third place it wholly ignores the main content of my letter—the speedy discharge of all of the so-called political prisoners, whether in Leavenworth or anywhere else. Public sentiment is thoroughly aroused on this subject, and letters such as the one to which I refer above are not going to temper it any. The matter is much too serious, and it is one that too deeply concerns the honor of the United States government, to permit the treatment that the War Department seems inclined to give it.

The imprisonment of these men and women is in defiance of the law of the land and in complete violation of the spirit of our American democracy. The War Department cannot, I realize, "recognize" them without admitting that our boasted democracy no longer exists; but it can free them, at once, one and all, and permit tardy reparation to atone, insofar as is possible, for outrageous maladministration, and an official shortsightedness and stupidity that borders on criminality.

This, permit me to say, is a personal communication, but it expresses a countrywide demand for justice.

BLANCHE WATSON.

*New York City, Jan. 30, 1919.*

MY DEAR MISS WATSON: Your letter of Jan. 30 has been referred to me. You evidently did not understand the letter which I wrote to you on January 23. The increased size of the Army during the war still influences the size of the present population of the Disciplinary Barracks, as you will realize upon consideration.

The only group of the so-called political prisoners who come under the War Department is composed of that small per cent of the drafted men professing conscientious objections who have been court-martialed and are serving sentence in Disciplinary Barracks. Representatives of the Secretary are reviewing all such cases at present and 113 of these men have already been discharged on their recommendations. However, the War Department has decided that it would not feel justified in extending on the basis of conscientious objections the same immediate clemency to the men who refused all service for their country that has been extended to those who by error or accident were not given the opportunity for such service.

F. P. KEPPEL,

Third Assistant Secretary.

*Washington, D. C., Feb. 13, 1919.*

SIR: After reading in the New York Times of January 23 the memorandum of Secretary Baker concerning the release of some conscientious objectors from Fort Leavenworth, one finds himself somewhat perplexed over the policy of the War Department in this respect.

According to this statement the released men comprise two groups. The first consists of those men who had been recommended for farm furloughs which they had not received because of delay in the execution of the plan. The second is composed of those men whom the "Board of Inquiry now find to be sincere, and who in their judgment would have been recommended for furloughs if they had had the opportunity of being examined by the Board of Inquiry before the court-martial proceedings." But, one asks, what does the Board of Inquiry consider necessary to establish the sincerity of a conscientious objector? Surely the steadfastness with which he has clung to his declaration of objections can be but a small part of the test, for every objector in Fort Leavenworth was there because he had maintained his position in spite of threats, ridicule, court-martial, and even physical torture—and only 113 of them were released. If the Board took cognizance of the reasons given by the men for their refusal to accept military service, what reasons did it consider of sufficient validity to establish the sincerity of the person advancing them? If, as has been done in some cases, the War Department is

following the definition of the conscientious objector which distinguishes him from a political objector in that his motives are purely religious, it is obvious that only those men whose attitude was based on religious convictions were given a chance to prove their sincerity. In that event are all the men who derive their views from political theory to be considered in a later hearing, or are they to be labeled "insincere" and left to serve long prison terms because, in the eyes of military law, no man can conscientiously hold political opinions varying from those of the majority?

But perhaps it is not a man's philosophy, or his steadfastness in maintaining a course of action in conformity with his belief, that proves his integrity of purpose and fitness to resume the duties of a citizen. Possibly this second group is composed of only those men who were able to answer in the affirmative the hypothetical question: "If you had been offered a farm furlough before you were court-martialed, would you have accepted?" But why should willingness to accept a farm furlough be made the criterion for judging which of our political prisoners should be granted amnesty? Could not a man be "sincere" in holding the position that all assistance to war is wrong, even such forms of non-combatant service as farm labor?

To be brief, is there anything in this memorandum of Mr. Baker's that can be taken as an indication of a liberal policy, on the part of the War Department toward a large group of objectors who have based their opposition to the war on political convictions, and who have, or would have, refused all forms of non-combatant as well as combatant service?

JEAN SAUNDERS.

*Washington, D. C.*

### HOW TO DISPOSE OF INTELLECTUALS

SIR: I have read the communication from Mr. E. C. Ross in regard to the intellectuals who are always stirring up trouble. There is one point which he left out, and that is the method of gathering up and disposing of such persons, taking into consideration the fact that this is a democratic country.

In ancient and barbarous times these people were handled very roughly. They were shut up in dungeons, tortured, and many of them burned alive; but in our highly civilized and humanely democratic time, this sort of punishment should not be allowed.

These intellectuals should be rounded up, shipped in cattle cars to some centralized stock yards—Chicago, for instance—and there be allowed to vote on the question as to where the penal farm should be established, the majority to decide. They should be given several choices—say, Montana, Alaska, Lower California, or Death Valley. Democracy. That's me all over.

A. L. BIGLER.

*Norfolk, Virginia.*



## Notes on New Books

OLD-DAD. By Eleanor Hallowell Abbot. Dutton; \$1.50.

Victorian damsels in pattens could boast no more impenetrable innocence than the heroine of this story; but given the most romantic of them, and she in a gold-lined nightmare of an even less credible swiftness, one might hope in vain for such colossal idiocy. Daphne Bretton, aged eighteen, is suddenly expelled from a prim little college for "having a boy in her room—at night." After telling her father of her disgrace, she gasps, "What is it about boys that makes it so wicked to have them around?" pitching headlong—quite consistently with her role—in a dead faint at his feet. Then follows a fantastically saccharine kaleidoscope of adventures, punctuated with kisses and revelations, which flash across a vivid landscape in Florida. And all this time the heroine goes blithely along, trailing clouds of the densest ignorance of every situation about her, adoring and running away from her clever father, wondering at and running away with a dissipated young stranger. Fortunately she is rescued from this fate, and on page 230 we are given a conversation between her and her eventual consort which brings to mind a famous column in a Chicago paper—nine consecutive remarks are ushered in by the nine interlocutory verbs: pawed, shivered, scoffed, worried, stammered, winced, apologized, purred, acquiesced. Seriously, this is the sort of book which, by reason of vague and romantic amorality, is nearer perversion than many a less aspiring volume. The book is advertised as "a sure cure for the blues," when the very suggestion that half a dozen such people inhabit the same sphere is depressing in itself.

HELEN OF TROY AND ROSE. By Phyllis Bottome. Century; \$1.35.

These two studies of women's temperaments are handled with the delicacy and insight that mark much of Phyllis Bottome's work. With deft, swift touches she suggests atmosphere and situations that other writers might take pages to present and thus these stories that might each have filled a volume can be included in a book rather shorter than an ordinary novel. Although they are strongly differentiated in plot and treatment, each of them deals with fundamentally the same theme—the matrimonial problems of an Englishman. One is inclined to stress the point of nationality, because the difficulties of the heroine seem to come from traits largely inherent in their nationality and training. Anyone acquainted with the educational ideal in England as it concerns the emotions, or who has read Mr. Wells' study of education in that country before the war in Joan

and Peter, must be aware how unfitted by training is the average reserved English girl of the upper classes to cope with the varied phases of passion. She is brought up to despise, deny, and suppress her emotions, to taboo romance and sentiment as "soppiness," and to aim, above all things, at self-control. Fortunately there are forces at work in human nature that counteract such one-sided training and insist on some sort of self-expression, but the training bears fruit in inhibitions that are difficult to overcome and that lead frequently to misadjustment and misunderstanding. One of Phyllis Bottome's heroines marries the typical Englishman who fears "a scene," but who needs one to bring him to his senses; while the other marries the typical Frenchman who would rather enjoy one. Each story shows the suffering that comes from the wife's unselfish but mistaken suppression of her personal feelings, but the solution of each is due to the exercise of the same virtue, prompted by a deep and moving passion. The lightness and charm of the style in which they are told, and the unobtrusive epigrams that are to be found here and there, cover a sound and serious psychology which gives these otherwise somewhat slight stories a very real value.

YASHKA: MY LIFE AS PEASANT, OFFICER AND EXILE. By Maria Botchkareva. Stokes; \$2.

The story of Maria Botchkareva, as set down by Isaac Don Levine, may be recommended to all lovers of a thrilling tale. To enemies of the Bolshevik it has the added charm of painting a blood-freezing picture of Bolshevism. A scene like that of the "Bolshevik death-trap" is, from both points of view, almost too good to be true: a field heaped with the corpses of murdered men; Yashka lined up with twenty officers to be shot; a humane Bolshevik (there are such, it seems) trying to persuade a bloodthirsty fellow-officer to grant a reprieve to Yashka; dramatic recognition of Yashka by a soldier whose life she had saved; his noble gesture—"If you shoot her, you will have to shoot me first!"—Yashka is saved, the twenty officers brutally murdered. Scarcely less exciting is the account of Botchkareva's early life, a story reminiscent of Gorky in its scenes of poverty, hard labor, floggings, drunkenness, brutality. Obeying an inner voice—"Go to war to save thy country!"—Botchkareva exchanged the dreariness of Siberian exile for the miseries, the heroism, and the comradeship of the trenches. Alarmed at the crumbling of discipline under the flood of talk released by the Revolution, she conceived and carried out the organization of the Women's Battalion of Death, in the hope of shaming the men. The story of that battalion is the pathetic story of a lost cause. The enterprise was swamped, together with "all that was good

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and noble in Russia," in the tide of "destruction and ignorance." "One did not want to live." But Yashka nevertheless fought gallantly for her life in all her subsequent hair-raising adventures, and finally escaped from Vladivostok to plead in America and England for the assistance of Allied arms against the Bolsheviks.

Those who enjoy mystifying themselves over the interpretation of the Russian soul may join Mr. Levine in regarding this "phenomenal rustic" as a symbol of the Russian people. The rest may rejoice with an easy conscience in the fascinating record of human experience.

**BLIND: A Comedy in One Act.** By Seumas O'Brien. Flying Stag Plays. Washington Square Bookshop; 35 cts.

**THE SLAVE WITH TWO FACES: An Allegory in One Act.** By Mary Carolyn Davies. Flying Stag Plays. Washington Square Bookshop; 35 cts.

Seumas O'Brien has attempted to do a Lady Gregory comedy, but alas his talent is not sufficient. The Davies play is better. It is indeed one of the justifications for the work of the Provincetown Players. At a time when allegories are far-fetched and literary, she has evoked a simple fresh allegory of life in decent dramatic form. Life is a slave who behaves towards us as a willing submissive bondsman if we adopt a high-handed courageous attitude, or as a cruel murdering brute if we falter and conciliate him. Therefore let us always wear our royal crowns in the presence of the slave, Life. Such is the theme, a theme capable of being worked into a masterpiece by a writer with more patience, more depth, more power—someone more like Andrejev, let us say—than the prolific and hasty Mary Carolyn Davies.

**RISE OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN REPUBLICS:** As Told in the Lives of Their Liberators. By William Spence Robertson. Appleton; \$3.

The American side of Spanish history is for us—and must eventually become for the whole world—the important side. As a European state Spain will live long and be remembered; but it is as an American civilization that she bids fair to become great. Spanish histories, limited as is Chapman's, glance with too indirect an eye at the Indies; the interest and intention are present, and the publishers very properly advertise that an understanding of Spanish America must be founded in an understanding of Spain; but it is impossible for a historian who is dealing with a mother country to see centrally her colonial empire—the colonies must find their own historians. Professor Robertson is among those who have of late embarked upon the Latin American

voyage, and he brings us his early cargo in a series of studies of the careers and characters of those Latin American leaders—Miranda, Hidalgo, Iturbide, Moreno, San Martin, Bolivar, and others—who in the years from 1808 to 1831 succeeded in forming independent republics out of Spain's vicerealties and captaincies general. There is—one should remark it first off—an admirable propriety in this author's mode of procedure. It is a bit old-fashioned nowadays to be writing history in terms of the biographies of heroes, the Plutarchian mode; we are all for ethnical and physiographical and economic interpretations. But if there is a portion of the world where the biographical foundation is justified, it is surely Latin America. Its first conquests were by men of overpowering wills and visionary ambitions—Cortes, Pizarro, Columbus himself, and that maddest of extravagants, Lope de Aguirre—and its later history has won for the whole continent, if not the name, at least the flavor of a Paradise of Dictators. The History of South America is a standing refutation of the economic interpretation, and a standing invitation to the enthusiasms of hero worship; and no period of it, in this regard, is superior to that which Professor Robertson here makes his own. The subject and the mode of treatment will themselves ensure him readers, which his book deserves no less for the results of original investigations, in South America and elsewhere, which he has incorporated in it.

**SANTO DOMINGO, A COUNTRY WITH A FUTURE.** By Otto Schoenrich. Macmillan; \$3.

Santo Domingo, or the Dominican Republic as it is officially termed, has had a career which, ever since the island of which it is a part was discovered by Columbus and brought under Spanish rule, has bordered on epilepsy. The historical sketch with which this book is begun covers nearly a hundred pages, in which revolts, guerilla warfare, murders, and conspiracies follow each other with amazing rapidity. The really eventful period of Santo Domingo's career ended with the military occupation by the United States beginning in November 1916, so that in two pages—such is the tranquilizing effect of Uncle Sam—the history is brought up to date. The remainder of the book is devoted to a somewhat detailed study of the country—its topography, climate, fauna and flora, religion, government, commerce, finance, and kindred subjects. One noticeable feature is the author's faculty of impartial exposition; he writes almost with the detachment of a financial reporter, and, it must be admitted, with little more imaginative insight. In this day of the development of foreign trade, however, the qualities possessed by Mr. Schoenrich's book make it of considerable value to those who would take advantage of the commercial opportunities offered.



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This book should be welcomed not only by philosophic radicals but by all who seriously wish to understand the nature of the germ behind the fever of discontent which now threatens the life of our civilization. (*The Public*).

The debate will be with those whom the author describes as "economists whose social sympathies (of the influence of which they are not always conscious) or whose training by their former teachers, incapacitates them for seeing any distinction between land and capital." To these Mr. Brown's work comes as a virile challenge, made in such terms that it must be taken up. The fundamental issues raised affect the economic policy of the country too profoundly to be ignored. The style of the work is clear, easy, and its vocabulary untechnical; while on every page it is provocative of thought. (*Single Tax Review*).

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Ralph Connor has taken a safe course in his latest venture in fiction. He has yoked the inspirational and the martial, and hitched them like a team of oxen to the solid but lumbering cart which has served him all these years as the vehicle for literary expression. Structurally, his story creaks; of freshness of style there is none. His material—abruptly to change the figure—is of that tested weave which beguiles the ready-made mind, and the cutting and fitting has been carried out along ultra-conservative lines. Mr. Connor invests his hero, a young missionary who has the physical attributes of Apollo, with a verbal reliance upon God which assures a marked religious flavor. Depending upon that, he naturally leaves the finer demands of craftsmanship to providence, and as a consequence the narrative is littered with nearly all the outworn counters of conventional novel writing which one can recall: "From the furious scorn in his voice and in his flaming face she visibly shrank, almost as if he had struck her." "Silent she stood, as if still under the spell of his words, her eyes devouring his face." "Her hand held his in a strong, warm grasp, but her eyes searched his face as if seeking something she greatly desired."

HEARD MELODIES. By Willoughby Weaving. Longmans, Green; \$2.

The poet who allows himself to be distracted by a sheer multiplicity of verse forms fashions a hobble which is almost certain to trip him. If he dips first into one form and then into another, and fails to fasten upon any inner guiding rule to steer his muse, the creature becomes tangled in the rhythmic underbrush, and comes out scratched and unhappy. This appears to have been the frequent fate of Mr. Weaving's muse. He tackles so many little twists of rhyme, and splits his lines in so many unexpected ways, that one seldom is able to fathom the inner harmony which may lie somewhere in the wreckage. Intelligibility, though it sometimes seems to have lost caste among the majority of contemporaneous verse-makers, still has some rights. It may be snubbed, but it can't be utterly ignored, as Mr. Weaving seems to have tried to do in these stanzas, called Robins:

Small robins cheer the end of the year  
When need for cheering is.  
What bird doth sing so sweetly through the spring?  
My heart, aread me this.

Richer maybe those songs of glee  
And wilder well I wis;  
But sweeter none than sing small robins dun  
When all things are amiss.

There is so much dashing about from one thing to another in *Heard Melodies* that the volume almost gives the impression of exercises in versifica-

tion. Occasionally, it is true, one is enabled to shake off this impression, for Mr. Weaving gives a sympathetic setting to a number of his themes. When he is content to sing, he is most sure in his art. Emotional undercurrents have a trick of churning his verse into choppy waves.

PORTRAITS OF WHISTLER: A Critical Study and an Iconography. By A. E. Gallatin. Lane; \$12.50.

Altogether fascinating is Gallatin's *Portraits of Whistler*, from its marbled boards to the collection of various and engaging portraits within. The *Critical Study*, if not noteworthy for its originality, is interesting for the lights it throws on Whistler's own estimates of these portraits and caricatures. It contains among other good things Beerbohm's definition of the latter as that which "with the simplest means most accurately exaggerates to the highest point the peculiarities of a human being, at his most characteristic moment, in the most beautiful manner." The volume concludes with literary portraits by Arthur Symonds, Frank Harris, and others of a clever, sensitive, imperious creature, with the flight of a butterfly, and the thrust of a rapier. Whether for the sake of the reproductions of oils and dry-points and charcoal sketches by such worthies as Boldini, Rothenstein, Charles Keene, and Whistler himself, or for the rounded figure of the man one gets from such different views of him, the gallery is full of brilliance and charm. It invites more of its kind, though it may be doubtful if another artist will repay his biographer in portraiture as richly as the autocrat of the ten o'clock.

AFRICA AND THE WAR. By Benjamin Brawley. Duffield; \$1.

This is a slight volume of a hundred odd pages, a half given to a few slight essays, the other half to the subject-title. The author sketches the Africa of today, the great prize for the imperialist and the exploiter, and asks that the German colonies be placed under an international tribunal, believing that this will not only work well for the Negroes in German Africa, but will benefit all the Negroes of the continent. "England and France, the chief possessors, and America, whose aid really decided the war, will find themselves working together in colonization, missions, and education on a scale never before contemplated." The African should be wisely educated, trained in mechanics, farming, engineering, even in the professions, especially medicine. Those preeminently fitted to do this work, Mr. Brawley believes, are the Negroes of the United States; and he ends his book with a plea for the training of American Negroes in the higher professional and technical studies that they may bring Western civilization to the black men of the African continent.

The book is written in a delightful style. Es-

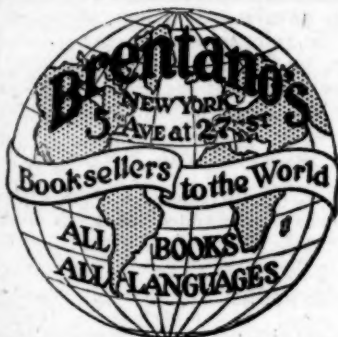
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pecially noteworthy is the chapter on Livingston, one of the greatest of explorers and most humane of men. If his spirit had dominated the white men who went later to Africa, we should have seen, instead of the monstrous and cruel exploitation of the last fifty years, a fine, intelligent development of native industry and power.

**THE CURIOUS QUEST.** By E. Phillips Oppenheim. Little, Brown; \$1.50.

We do not know whether Mr. Oppenheim is bent upon forging his own five-foot shelf, but certainly he has made a brave beginning: by the testimony of a list published in the back of the present novel it is the latest in a brood of forty-four. Facing such a record, one is tempted from the critical highroad into speculative bypaths, there to marvel upon the methods of literary incubation which make possible so prolific an output. This assiduous production, at any rate, throws light upon the author's occasional slump in inventiveness. It doubtless accounts for the framework of the present novel, in which Mr. Oppenheim has turned to a device that is beginning to creak from overwork—the devious adventures of a millionaire who wagers with his physician that he can start with a five-pound note and live for a year on his own resources. From this familiar springboard, we dive into a narrative which whirls the young idler through the usual difficulties attending these eccentric figments of the best-selling imagination. Our hero meets the usual types and the usual typist, and comes through the delightful ordeal in a manner befitting a gentleman and a millionaire. The complications are ample for the purposes of light entertainment; the manner is tailored to the matter. The characters are artificially warmed into existence; their relation to life is about as intimate as that of the egg to the incubator.

**TALES OF AN OLD SEA PORT.** By Wilfrid Harold Munro. Princeton University Press. \$1.50.

The wild adventures of Simeon Potter, Norwest John, and De Wolf Hopper's ship Yankee have stimulated the romantic fancies of many generations of Bristol, Rhode Island, youth. The outsider is given an intimate introduction to these historic characters in *Tales of an Old Sea Port*. Mr. Munro has published the Yankee's log, the reminiscences of Norwest John—one of the first Americans to encircle the world via Siberia—and a letter about Simeon Potter, the most interesting of the three. In 1740, while on a privateering expedition against the French, Captain Potter captured a missionary father whom he kept prisoner for a few days. Father Fauque has reported the incident in a charming letter that serves as a corrective to the exaggerated tales of Potter's strength as recorded by tradition.

**AFTERGLOW.** By James Fenimore Cooper, Jr. Yale University Press; \$1.

Thrice fitting is the title *Afterglow* for the slender collection of poems by Captain Cooper. The book is a posthumous publication; it contains vague, sweet, and delicate expressions of quiet moods; and it truly serves as an evanescent afterglow to the bulkier work of the poet's great-grandfather. Occasionally there is a poem to be grateful for; such a one is *An Answer*, a neat rejoinder to those scientific ones who attempt to mark out all life with lens and rule. But because these gracefully turned bits of metrical verse lack rarity and subtlety and depth, one is forced to conclude that the Cooper literary talent, emerging from underground in the fourth generation, remains still only a talent. The best pages of the volumes are not poetry, but an essay at the back, on Religion, in which a forthright statement of values and of the need for self-realization is given in a manner worthy of Randolph Bourne.

### Books of the Fortnight

The following list comprises THE DIAL's selection of books recommended among the publications received during the last two weeks:

*Proposed Roads to Freedom: Socialism, Anarchism, and Syndicalism.* By Bertrand Russell. 12mo, 218 pages. Henry Holt & Co. \$1.50.

*Altruism: Its Nature and Varieties.* By George Herbert Palmer. 12mo, 138 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.25.

*Richard Cobden, The International Man.* By J. A. Hobson. Illustrated, 12mo, 415 pages. Henry Holt & Co. \$5.00.

*Musings and Memories of a Musician.* By George Henschel. 8vo, 398 pages. Macmillan Co. \$5.

*Voltaire in His Letters: Being a Selection from His Correspondence.* Translated, with an introduction, by S. G. Tallentyre. Illustrated, 8vo, 270 pages. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$3.50.

*In the Key of Blue, and Other Prose Essays.* By John Addington Symonds. 12mo, 302 pages. Macmillan Co.

*Essays, Irish and American.* By John Butler Yeats. Illustrated, 12mo, 95 pages. Macmillan Co. \$1.50.

*The Wild Swans at Coole.* Verse. By W. B. Yeats. 12mo, 114 pages. Macmillan Co. \$1.25.

*Look! We Have Come Through.* Verse. By D. H. Lawrence. 8vo, 163 pages. B. W. Huebsch. \$1.50.

*Civilization, 1914-1917.* Sketches. By Georges Duhamel. 12mo, 288 pages. Century Co. \$1.50.

*The Amethyst Ring.* A novel. By Anatole France. Edited by Frederic Chapman. 8vo, 304 pages. John Lane Co. \$2.

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## Current News

This month Stephen McKenna's novel, *Midas and Son*, will be brought out in this country by the Dorans.

The Macmillan Co. have now imported at \$1.50 *The Candle of Vision*, by "A. E." (George W. Russell), which the English Macmillans published late last year and which Ernest A. Boyd reviewed in *THE DIAL* for January 11.

Under the title *The Atlantic Monthly and Its Makers* M. A. DeWolfe Howe has written an anecdotal historical sketch of the magazine and the eight editors that have directed it since its founding in 1857. The volume, which is illustrated, is published by the Atlantic Monthly Press at \$1.

The United States Catalogue Supplement, a cumulative index of books published in the United States from 1912 to 1917, listing 81,000 volumes, has just been issued by the H. W. Wilson Co. The next issue in the series will be bound June 30, 1919 and will cover the publications of the previous eighteen months.

Vincent Starrett has made Arthur Machen the subject of a thirty-one page monograph published in Chicago by Walter M. Hill. The essay, which is rather popularly written, is not unfairly characterized by its sub-title: *A Novelist of Ecstasy and Sin*. Two hitherto uncollected poems by Mr. Machen—*The Remembrance of the Bard*, and *The Praise of Myfanwy*—are appended.

The Department of Labor has now published a supplementary List of References which adds 460 titles to the 415 titles of its *Reconstruction Bibliography*, compiled by Laura A. Thompson, issued last December. Another valuable bibliography has been prepared by the Library War Service of the American Library Association, a list of books on subjects taught in re-education hospitals.

There is strange bottling in *The Wine of Astonishment*, by Mary Hastings Bradley (Appleton; \$1.50). The author keeps both her hero and her heroine in the vineyard of virginity against all odds. For this purpose the man vanquishes temptation in repeated encounters, while the girl is fenced about with a "marriage of friendship," from which she is finally released. *The Wine of Astonishment* is redolent of pungent puritanism.

*Essays Irish and American*, by John Butler Yeats, originally published by the Talbot Press, Dublin, has now been imported by the Macmillan Company at \$1.50. The volume—which includes *Recollections of Samuel Butler*, *Back to the Home*, *Why the Englishman Is Happy*, *Synge and the Irish*, *The Modern Woman*, *Watts and the Method of Art*, and an appreciation by "A. E."—was reviewed by Ernest Boyd in the December 14 *DIAL*.

Bibliophiles of the erudite sort will welcome two recent books about books. One is a second edition, after a quarter-century, of Alfred W. Pollard's

*Early Illustrated Books: A History of the Decoration and Illustration of Books in the 15th and 16th Centuries* (Dutton; \$2). The original text of this delightful landmark in bibliography has been changed only to admit corrections, in which the author has had the assistance of Mr. Victor Schoderer, of the British Museum. The numerous illustrations are excellently reproduced. The other is an essay by Wilbur Macey Stone on *The Divine and Moral Songs of Isaac Watts*, which was originally published in 1715 and was the first song book written and printed for children. Before its popularity passed, a century and a half later, the little book ran to nearly six hundred editions, a tentative list of which is appended to Mr. Stone's rather precious historical essay. The volume is published by *The Triptych*, 15 Park Row, New York City, in a limited edition at \$2.50.

The Report of the Librarian of Congress for the year which ended last June (Government Printing Office: 45 cts.) affords an index of the war's effect upon book publishing in this country. Accessions by copyright fell off more than a thousand titles from the 1917 figure—13,713 as against 14,738. The total accessions were 32,638 fewer than in 1917. In fact, the only sources that provided more titles than in the previous year were the public printer, the state governments, and the Library's own publications. Probably the most interesting purchases were twenty-eight additions to the collection of first or early editions of dramas and romances, the list including plays by Dekker, Farquhar, Fletcher, Ford, Gascoigne, Heywood, Massinger, and others. A notable gift, in view of the approaching Whitman Centenary, was that from Mr. Thomas B. Harned, consisting of "a large portion of the literary remains of Walt Whitman"—scrapbooks, pamphlets, periodicals, various editions, manuscript, and clippings.

## Contributors

Frank Tannenbaum joined the army last summer, and his military experience has included three different branches of the service and training in two camps.

Cuthbert Wright, an editor of the *Harvard Monthly* before his induction into the army, is with the A. E. F. in France. He is the author of *One Way of Love* (Brentano, 1916; \$1), and was one of the contributors to the anthology *Eight Harvard Poets* (Gomme, 1917; \$1).

Emanuel Carnevali was born in Florence. He has contributed to several magazines and has won one of the annual prizes of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. His first book, *The Rhythmical Talk of E. C.*, will soon be published.

The other contributors to this issue have previously written for *THE DIAL*.



## Are You Different?

Here are random sentences from our morning mail

Some of these letters are from old subscribers

Some are from new acquaintances

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